THREE GREEK CHILDREN

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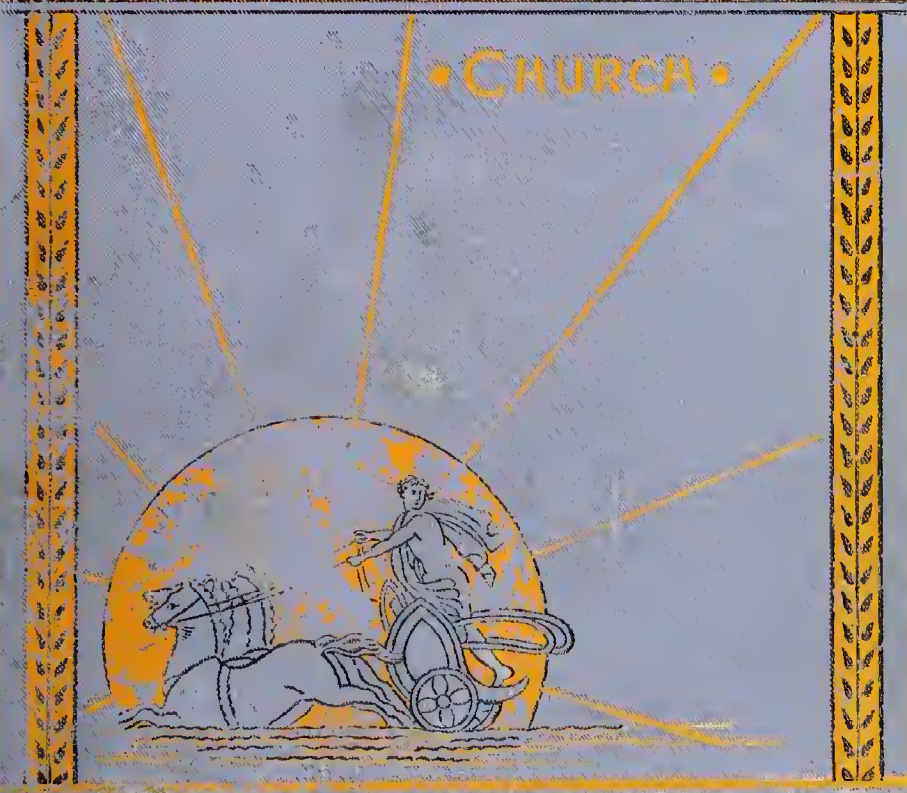

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HERA AND THE CHARIOT OF THE SUN.—*Frontispiece.*

THREE GREEK CHILDREN

A STORY OF HOME IN OLD TIME

BY THE

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AFTER FLAXMAN AND THE ANTIQUE

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THREE GREEK CHILDREN.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOME IN ATHENS.

I AM going to tell you about some Greek children, who lived more than two thousand years ago in a city called Athens. The city stands still, and the ruins of many of its old buildings are to be seen. Most of these buildings were temples, in which these people used to worship their many gods. There was Phœbus, the sun-god; and Hera, the goddess of power; and Athené, the goddess of wisdom; and Demeter, or mother-earth. For they did not know, as did the Jews—who had, you will remember, but one temple,—that there is but one God from whom all good things come down to men. Athens was one of the richest and

most beautiful cities of the world, and very powerful too; only at the particular time of which I am writing the people were in great distress. Their enemies sent an army every year into their country, and shut them up in their walls during all the spring and summer time. Thousands and thousands more than the city could properly hold were crowded into it; numbers of people had no houses to live in, and had to do as best they could under carts tilted up, and even in great barrels—any thing that could give them shelter. Even the rich felt this trouble very much, and especially the children, who had no out-door games; for the streets were, of course, not fit for them to play in, and they got sadly tired, in the hot days, of being always shut up in their nurseries.

It is a very hot day in July, and the three children I am going to tell you about are feeling very tired, and, I am afraid, a little cross. There are two girls, Gorgo and Rhodium (Rhodium means *Little Rose*), and a boy, Hipponax (which is in English *Horse King*). Gorgo

and Rhodium are playing with dolls, not made of wax or wood, like our English dolls, but of clay, and painted to make them look like soldiers, sailors, and merchants, or ladies finely dressed, or working women. Gorgo, who is the elder of the two girls, likes soldier dolls, and has divided hers into two little armies. One army she calls Spartans (the Spartans were the enemies who were shutting up the people in the walls), and the other Athenians. She sits on the floor and rolls a ball, first into one army and then into the other. I don't think that she rolls it quite fairly, for more of the Spartans are upset than of the Athenians. Gorgo is just ten years old. Her sister, who is four years younger, does not care about soldier dolls, but is never tired of playing at mother, nurse, and child, with three dolls which her own nurse has dressed up for her. Hipponax, who is four, is amusing himself with a cockchafer, which one of the servants has caught for him. It has got a thread tied round it, and he holds the other end of the thread in his hand and lets it

fly about the room. This is rather a cruel game, and his sisters seem to think so, for when the little boy runs out of the room to get a drink of water, Gorgo says to Rhodium: "I do wish that tiresome child would find something else to play with besides these wretched cockchafers. They do make such a nasty buzzing, and, besides, they fly up against one's face, and I don't like the feel of them at all. And I am sure they must be very unhappy. I shall cut the thread while he is away, and let the poor thing go."

"Oh! but he will be so angry," said Rhodium, who is a timid, peaceable child, and rather afraid of her sturdy little brother, who has already begun to think that he is very much better than his sisters.

"He may be as angry as he likes," says Gorgo, and cuts the thread which the little boy had tied to the leg of a chair.

Hipponax came back just in time to see the beetle fly off through the open window, and very angry he was. He knew that Gorgo had

let it go, and, small as he was, he was ready to fly at her, when Rhodium, the peacemaker, had a happy thought.

"Brother, dear," she said, "will you have my chariot to play with?"

It was a beautiful little toy of ivory, with four horses made of wood, and so beautifully carved and painted that, but for their size, they might have seemed alive. The girl's uncle had given it her the year before, when he won the chariot race at the great games of Olympia. Little Hipponax thought it ought to belong to him. "What have girls to do with horses and chariots?" he would say; "but I am the Horse King." It was a special treat for him to be allowed to play with it, and poor Rhodium used to look on in great fear while he dragged it about the room, pretending that he was winning a race. This is what he began to do now, and his two sisters played at being the people that look on, and clapped their hands and shouted, while he ran about with it.

Happily, before any mischief was done, the

nurse came back, and the children left their play to ask her for a story.

Nurse was a Spartan woman. Rich people always got Spartan nurses for their children if they could, for they had a way of keeping them in order without being unkind. She had come into the family just after Gorgo's birth, and could not bear to leave the dear little baby when the war broke out between her country and Athens. And there she had stopped ever since, and the children loved her almost as much as they loved their mother.

"A story, nurse! a story!" they all cried.

"Have you been good children?" she said.

Hipponax hung his head, but as he had not actually beaten his sister she was able to give him a good character.

So nurse made the two girls sit by her, and took Hipponax on her knee, and told them the

STORY OF THE BOY WHOM DEMETER LOVED.

"Once upon a time the goddess Demeter went wandering about the world looking for her

daughter, whom she had lost, and in her wanderings she came to this country in which we are now living. There was a poor man that had a small farm about ten miles from the city. He had two children, one a girl of about ten years old, and the other a baby-boy. The girl took care of two goats, which she used to lead out to pasture and to milk. One day as she was coming home she saw Demeter, who was dressed as a poor woman, sitting on a stone near the house. 'Mother,' she said, 'is there any thing that you want?' And when Demeter said nothing, but only shook her head and began to cry (for it was a sad thing to be called 'mother' now that she had lost her daughter), the little girl ran to her father and told him about the poor woman. The kind man came out and begged her to come in, though it was but a poor place, he said. Now it so happened that the baby-boy was very ill. Indeed, his mother had no hope that he would ever be well; but when Demeter went up to him and kissed him as he lay in the cradle, at once he began to get better, and before half an hour

was over he was kicking and crowing as if he had never been ill in his life. Then they sat down to supper—some curds and whey made out of goat's milk, and honey in the comb, and apples."

"But had n't they any bread?" broke in little Rhodium.

"No, my child," said nurse; "no one knew then how to make bread.

"When they all went to bed Demeter said that she would sit up by the fire, for she felt she could not sleep. About midnight, when all were sound asleep, she took the baby out of his cradle, and laid him in the middle of the fire. Ah! you look frightened; but she knew what she was about. She had done something to the child that the fire should not hurt him, but only burn out of him what was weak and mortal, so that he should not die like other people. But when this was half done the mother, who was still a little anxious about the baby, happened to wake and put her hand very gently on the cradle. And lo! it was empty! That woke her up, you

may be sure, thoroughly, and she sprang out of bed, and going into the other room saw the child lying in the middle of the fire. She had it out in a moment, making sure that it must be dreadfully burnt, if it was not dead. How astonished she was when she found it was not hurt at all! Then Demeter said, not angrily, but sadly: 'Foolish mother, why did you not trust me, and leave him there? Now your child will die some day like other men and women. Still, I will make him a wise man, for he shall learn to plough, and sow, and reap.' And this is how people first got to grow wheat, and to make bread."

Nurse had just finished her story when something happened that was very rare indeed—the children's father came into the nursery, for generally they went down to see him. But now he had such good news to tell them that he could not wait.

"There is peace, dear children," he said; "peace has been made to-day."

"And we shall be able to go to our dear country home?" said Gorgo.

"Yes," said he, "though I am afraid that you will find it in a very sad state."

All the rest of the day the children were almost out of their minds with joy. When the two younger ones had gone to bed, nurse said to Gorgo: "Now I am going to tell you a story about another Gorgo, who lived many years ago in my own dear country. I would not tell you before, because I was sure that you did not like my people, and did not care to know any thing about them. But now that we are friends again you shall hear it.

"This Gorgo was daughter to one of our kings, and was about a year younger than you are. One day she was playing with her dolls in her father's room, when a stranger was talking to him on some very serious business. The stranger wished him to take an army of Spartans on a very dangerous expedition, and when he said no, offered him money: first ten, then twenty, then fifty talents. When the king heard of the fifty talents he began to be shaken, for all the Spartans, even the kings, are very

poor, and this was a great sum of money. Then Gorgo looked up from her dolls, and said: 'Father, go away, or else this stranger will do you harm.' When she grew up to be a woman she became the wife of that Spartan king who fought with his three hundred men against all the army of the Persians, and I think she helped him to be the brave man he was."

The next day when Gorgo played with her dolls, she made them into one army, and made believe that they were going to march against the Persians.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME AT MARATHON.

In about a week's time the three children were able to leave Athens for their dear country home. Dear it was, though I do not think that even Gorgo, the eldest, remembered much about it, and little Hipponax had never even seen it. But they had heard their father and mother talk about it till they seemed to know it as well as if they had lived there all their lives. It was about ten miles from the city, and just outside a little village called Marathon. How pleased they were when they found that after all not much harm had been done to the house, and garden, and farm! The reason of this was that one of the Spartan generals had been living there, and that by great good luck this general was nurse's own foster-brother. He had taken care of the place for

his own sake, and also because he knew that its owners were very kind to his foster-sister. So the house was bright, and clean, and ready, with a very little preparation, for them to live in; and the garden was full of flowers, and, joy of joys! there was an orchard, with beautiful red pomegranates and apples and pears in it. Behind the house, too, on the slope of the hill, there was an olive-yard, and, what the children thought much prettier, a vineyard, in which the grapes were beginning to grow yellow and purple. Little Hipponax, who had scarcely been outside the city since he was born, was quite wild with delight. The first morning after they got there he slipped away from nurse as soon as he was dressed—and you may be sure he did not give her much peace after it had once begun to be light,—and went to explore the beautiful new place for himself. When he found the apples and pears hanging on the trees he was quite astonished. He ran into the house, and made his way to his mother's room, where she was still fast asleep; for

mothers used to be very tired in those days, just as they are in these, with a family "move."

"O mother!" he cried, "do get up and come and look at this beautiful fruit. Why, it is really hanging on the trees!"

"Why not?" his mother said, for she was still very sleepy, and did not remember at the moment that her little boy had never seen a fruit-tree before.

"Oh, but, mother," he went on, "in Athens it never used to hang on trees, but used to lie on boards, or be piled up in baskets in the shops. And I used to think that the men in the shops made it, for it cost a lot of money, you used to say, just like the other things which people make. But now, I suppose, we may have as much of it as we like?"

"Yes, darling," said his mother; "or perhaps we had better say, as much as nurse thinks good for you."

After breakfast, while the little girls were helping their mother to get things into order, Hipponax went for a walk with his father

round the farm. It would not be easy to say what pleased him most, but I think it was the kind looks that all the people that were at work on the farm gave him. In fact, if he had not been a very nice, simple little fellow he might easily have been spoilt. At Athens, his father, whose name, I should have told you, was Leon, was not a very great man, but here he was quite the chief person of the place, and the "little master," whom the old servants had never seen before, was made much of. He felt quite hot and ashamed when the old people kissed his hand, and won their hearts by offering his cheek instead. When they came to the vineyard they found a very old man busy tying up some of the clusters that were touching the ground. He did this wonderfully well though he had but one hand. He was dressed like the other laborers, and Hipponax was surprised to see his father kiss him on both cheeks, while he said: "Here is the little one, father. Is he like the old stock?"

"The gods make it flourish!" said the old

man, and he stooped down and kissed the little boy.

Then Leon and the old man had some talk together about the vines and other matters of the farm. As they were going home Hipponax said: "Father, why did you kiss the old man and call him 'father'?"

Leon answered: "Wait till to-morrow, my little son, and you shall hear a story that you must never forget as long as you live."

The next day all the family went on an expedition. There was a cushioned carriage drawn by two mules; in this the children rode with their mother and nurse. The old man, too, whom Hipponax had seen in the vineyard, went with them. Leon rode on horseback by the side of the carriage. The road ran along by the side of a little stream, which was then almost dry. On either side were cornfields, now quite bare, and sometimes a little cottage, with its little clump of old, gray olive-trees. Some of the cottages were in ruins, but the olive-trees seemed not to have been hurt at all. After

they had gone four or five miles they came to two mounds, one of which had a number of little pillars on it. Here the carriage stopped, and the children got down. Then Leon said to the old man, whose name was Sciton: "Sciton, no one but you must take them to see it." So Sciton took the little boy by the hand, and beckoned to the girls that they were to follow. When they came near, they saw that all the pillars had names written on them, some more and some less. Sciton took them to one on which there were about thirty names, and told Gorgo, who, you will remember, was the elder of the two girls, to read them. It was not very easy to spell them out, for the letters were a little old-fashioned. But after she had looked at them about a minute she almost screamed: "Oh, mother, here is father's name, and brother's too!" And sure enough there they were: *Leon, son of Hipponax.* Old Sciton looked proud and sad, too, when he heard it. Then Leon said to him: "Tell them the story, Sciton." So Sciton told them the story of the

great battle of Marathon, in which he had himself fought almost seventy years before.

"Once upon a time some people called Persians came to conquer this country. They came in ships from over the sea, and there were so many of them that they quite covered all this plain that you now see. Still the Athenians went out to fight with them, and drew up their little army—it was very little to be compared with the Persians—just under the hills there. Your great-grandfather was among them, and I was allowed to go with him, though I was only a slave then. Well, we waited several days, and began to get very sad and dull; and there were some who even talked about making peace. At last one of the generals, who was my master's uncle, persuaded the others to fight. How glad we all were to hear it, and that very night a thousand men from a little town called Platæa marched in to help us. The next day, when we had been drawn up in line and had said our prayers, we set off running towards the enemy. One of their prisoners afterwards told us that

they thought we were mad. Well, your great-grandfather and I were in the middle of the line, and we happened to have the very strongest of the Persians to fight with, and we came up to them all out of breath and out of order. There were so many of them that they pushed us back, and we had not strength to stand, though we did not wish to move. Your great-grandfather was a very strong man, and could run almost any distance without getting out of breath. He *would* not give way, and he was left quite alone, and of course I could not leave him. I do not know how many Persians he struck down, but at last one came behind him and aimed a great blow at his head. I put my arm up to save him, and the sword lopped my hand sheer off and wounded him. Then another Persian struck him, and we fell both together. I do not remember any thing more; but I heard that the middle of our line was broken—the two ends won the battle. My dear master was dead when they came to look for us, but I was just alive, and when I got better they made me free. That is his name your sister read on the pillar there."

"Well," said Leon to little Hipponax, "that is the story that you must never forget. Never forget, too, that you have seen one of the 'men who fought at Marathon.'"

CHAPTER III.

AT THE TOILET.

It was one of the little girl's great delights to see their mother dress, or, perhaps I should say, be dressed, for her maid or maids (she generally had two or three waiting on her) used to do very nearly every thing for her. What she used to wear is more than I can tell you. But you can get some notion of what she looked like when the dressing was finished from the picture that you will find with this chapter.

One day Gorgo—little Rhodium happened that day to be not quite well—found a new maid waiting upon her mother. The old one, who had been with her ever since her marriage, was just married. This sort of thing often happens in England. A girl goes into service when she is sixteen or seventeen years old, and then, perhaps in ten years' time, when she has saved

up some money, she marries a young man whom she knew at home, or whose acquaintance she has made since, perhaps the baker's young man, or the young fellow that calls for orders from the grocer. But this was not at all what had happened to Lapaxo, for this was the name of the young woman who had just married. In the summer of the year in which Leon was married he had gone on an expedition against some towns in Thrace, which is the country that they now call Albania. The expedition did not do very much, for the Thracians were very brave and fierce, and were always ready to meet the Athenians when they tried to land. But they did manage to take one of the towns, coming on it by surprise early one morning, when the country people were going in to market, and the gates happened to be blocked up by a number of carts. When it was taken, all the people in it were sold as slaves. This was a shocking thing to do, but it was one of the ways in which money was got to pay the soldiers' and sailors' wages. This time the general got nearly £30,000 for

the slaves he sold. Leon did not think it was wrong; but he had a tender heart, and when he saw poor Lapaxo hiding her face with her hands and crying as if her heart would break, he could not help being very sorry for her. She was the daughter of one of the chief men of the place, and was a very pretty, refined-looking girl. So Leon determined to buy her, and give her to his wife that was to be. He had to give as much as £200 for her, for the slave-dealers who followed the army bid very high. Happily Leon was a rich man, and when he said out aloud: "By Hera, I will give two talents sooner than let her go," the dealers gave up. This was how Lapaxo came to be Elpinicé's maid.

And now you shall hear about her marriage. For eight years she lived with her mistress, and seemed to have no thought of a change. She would not so much as look at any of the slaves, and when a rich tradesman, who had happened to see her when he was putting up some beautiful purple curtains from Thyatira, wanted to make her his wife, she said "No,"

quite angrily. (You must understand that this man was a foreigner, for, of course, no Athenian would have thought of marrying a slave.) Well, one day she went with her mistress to a great service in one of the temples, and there were some archers from Thrace keeping the road that the crowd might not push against the ladies. When she saw the captain of the archers, she turned quite pale. He was her old lover. You see the Thracians did not much care for whom they fought, and this young man, who had been away from the town when it was taken, had taken service with the Athenian army, and being a brave and clever fellow, had done very well. He recognized Lapaxo quite as quickly as she had recognized him, and it was not long before he found out where she lived. By great good luck he had served under Leon, and had once helped him when he was wounded. So when he went with a bag of gold, which he had saved out of his pay, and told his story, and wanted to buy Lapaxo's freedom, Leon said: "No, my good friend, I have long wanted to do

THE TOILET.

something for you, so I will set her free for nothing, and you shall use the money to begin housekeeping with."

This is quite a long story about Elpinicé's maid; but I wanted you to know how people got their servants in those days.[1] And how, do you think, did the lady get her new one? Why, she was left to her by her aunt's will. The old lady thought very highly of her, and left her to Elpinicé because she was her favorite niece. "I bequeath," she wrote in her will, "my chief dresser, Glykerion by name, to my brother's daughter, Elpinicé, wife of Leon, son of Hipponax. Let her be reckoned as of the value of twenty minas (about £83), for indeed she is the most skilful adorner in Athens. But let not her mistress spare the slipper, for indeed she is as lazy as she is skilful." You must know that ladies used to beat their maids with their slippers if they did not please them.

So Glykerion came to wait on Leon's wife, and this was the day on which she began her

[1] Elpinicé means "Victory of Hope."

duties. She got on well enough, though indeed she seemed to think it all beneath her, till she had done dressing her mistress' hair. Then she began to look about as if for something that she could not find. At last she whispered to one of the slave girls: "Where is the rouge box?" Her mistress heard her, and said: "I never use rouge." Glykerion almost dropped the brush with which she was giving one or two last touches to the hair. Then she recovered herself. "Truly your ladyship has color enough of your own. But a little white-lead——" "No, nor white-lead either," said Elpinicé; "I am quite content to be as nature made me." "Nature!" said the maid, under her breath. "What barbarism! Castor preserve me! What would my old mistress have said?"

Elpinicé thought it a good time, when the maid was gone, to have a little talk with Gorgo about these things. The little girl was beginning, as little girls sometimes will, to think too much about herself. She would look in the

glass (I should rather say the "brass," for people in those days used polished brass or silver instead of glass, to see their faces in), and put on a smile or a languishing look, or strike an attitude. Once her mother found her trying on a mantle, with a couple of bracelets on her arm that she had taken out of the jewelry box. So now she said:

"I am going to tell my little girl something that happened before she was born. I am afraid she will think that her mother was a very foolish woman. Well, when I was married I was not content to be as nature made me, but used to paint myself red and white with the very things that you heard the maid ask for. I must say this for myself, that I had been taught to do it; it was the custom in our family, as it is in many families still. And this is how I was cured of it. One day, about a month after we had been married, your dear father said, 'I have a present for you, my love,' and he showed me a very handsome-looking casket. When I opened it, there was a mantle of a rich purple,

just the very color that he knew I liked best, and under the mantle a fine gold bracelet wrapped in wool, and at the bottom a number of silver pieces. I was delighted, and threw my arms round his neck and kissed him. 'You dear, good husband,' I said, 'what a beautiful present!' There was just a little twinkle in his eye. I did notice that, but I was too much pleased to think any thing about it. So I began to count over the money, for I had never even seen so much together before. And as I was counting it, one of the pieces slipped out of my hand and fell on the table. It made such a dull sound, not in the least like the ring of good money, that I cried out: 'Oh! it must be bad!' 'It does not sound well,' your father said; 'try another one.' So I tried another one, and that was just as bad, and then a third and a fourth, till I was quite tired, and there was not a single good one among them. Then your father said: 'Just try the bracelet with your nail; perhaps that is not all right, and sure enough, when I tried it with my nail, a piece of gold leaf came

off, and showed me the wood underneath. 'Dear me,' said my husband, 'this is a bad business.' As for me, I burst out crying, and one of the tears fell on the mantle, and I saw the beautiful purple color begin to run. 'Well,' said my husband, 'there is only the casket left; let us try that.' And he wetted his finger, and, lo and behold! instead of being ebony, as I had thought, it was only common pine wood painted black! And so all my beautiful present was a mere sham. I threw myself on the couch, and cried as if my heart would break. Then your father came and sat down by me, and said: 'So my darling likes real things, not sham. And quite right, too; and so does her husband. He likes his wife's real face, and not a face painted to look redder than it is and whiter than it is; and he likes his wife's real figure, which he thinks just of the right height, and not one that is made about three inches taller than it is with high-heeled boots. And now, my darling, forgive your husband for his little trick, and give him a kiss.' So I looked up, and he had artfully

put a looking-glass so that I could not help seeing myself. Oh! what a fright I was, for the tears had run down through the red and white, and made the most terrible mess of my face. Well, that finished the lesson, if it wanted finishing. I never used paint again. And the next day your father gave me just such another present, only this time every thing was real, casket, mantle, bracelet, money, and all."

CHAPTER IV.

OLD HYLAX.

One of the new friends whom the children made at the Marathon house was old Hylax. This name means "Barker," and so you will not be surprised when I tell you that old Hylax was a dog. Very old he was, and so weak that he could no longer go out hunting, but used to spend the day lying in the sun, which never seemed too hot for him. You would have thought him dead as he lay stretched out at full length, except that now and then he would make a lazy little snap at the flies. But he used to wake up a little when the hunting party came home; they used always to go and show him what they had caught, and for a minute or two he would look quite young again. They let him hold the hare or the rabbit in his mouth, and the old sparkle came into his eye, and the

bristly hair round his neck grew rough, and he gave a very deep growl. Poor old fellow! I wonder whether he thought of the happy time long ago when he was swift and strong? In shape and size he was something like a deer-hound, which, I may tell you, is a large, rough greyhound.

I said that the children made friends with him, but I must tell you that he made a curious difference in his way of behaving to them. He did not take much notice of the little girls. When they patted him he would just open his eyes, and wag his tail ever so little. But any one could see that he thought much more of Hipponax. He would lift his head and try to lick the little boy's hand, and wag his tail quite briskly. And when Leon, the children's father, came to see him, as he did every morning and evening, the poor old dog used to stagger up on to his feet and lift one of his paws for his master to shake, and look at him as if he loved him, which I am sure he did with all the heart he had. Once Leon come home wetted

to the skin with a sudden storm, and went into the house to change his clothes, and did not think of coming out again to say good-night to Hylax. That night the poor old dog seemed not to be able to rest. A groom, who was sitting up with a sick horse, said next morning that he heard him again and again give a little moan as if something was troubling him.

"Is Hylax very old?" said Gorgo to her father the next day when they went to pay him their morning visit.

"Yes," said Leon; "nearly twice as old as you are. Indeed, he is the oldest dog I ever heard of except one. Shall I tell you how I came to get him?"

"Yes, father!" cried all the children together, and Leon began.

"When I was a boy, about two years older than Gorgo, I went with my father to pay a visit to an old friend of his in Arcadia. There are great woods in that country, and wild beasts, such as bears and wolves, which we never see here. Well, my father and his friend were very

fond of hunting, and sometimes they used to take me with them. Very proud and pleased I was, and though I could not help my heart beating a little quickly when a bear, for instance, stood at bay, I behaved pretty well. Indeed, our host, Pauson was his name, was so pleased with me that he gave me a little hunting spear of my own.

"Well, one day Pauson and my father went after a great wild boar that was quite famous in those parts. As it was a long journey, and would be a difficult bit of hunting, they left me at home. Then I did a very silly thing. The truth was that Pauson's present had made me quite conceited. I felt as if I were grown up, and what should come into my head but that I would do a little bit of hunting on my own account.

"The day after Pauson and my father started —they were to be away three or four days—I got up very early in the morning, managed to get out of the house without waking any of the servants, and was off, with my spear in my

hand, into the wood. I had not gone half a mile when I heard a rustling in a thicket, and there, right in front of me, was a bear!"

"O father!" cried little Hipponax, "were you very much frightened?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I think that I was. Generally bears leave people alone if they are left alone themselves. But this happened to have a cub with it. It turned, looked at me, growled, and then trotted towards me. I was not too frightened to remember what I ought to do. So I knelt on one knee, and planted my spear, which, after all, was not much more than a toy, as firmly as I could upon the ground, and waited. When the bear was close to me she lifted herself upon her hind legs and tried to hug me. If I could have held the spear firm, of course she could not have done it, but I was not strong enough. The point just pricked the beast's skin, and then the creature got its fore paws round me. Just at that moment it was knocked over by something that jumped on it from behind. This was a big dog that had

been left behind by the hunters, because she had a litter of puppies to attend to. She had seen me go out, and followed me, either because she wanted some amusement, or because she knew that I was a foolish young creature, and must be taken care of. Anyhow, she came just in time. What a fight she and the bear had, rolling over and over on the ground! but of course the bear was much the stronger, and when two woodcutters came by a few minutes afterwards the poor dog was nearly dead. As for me, I had got no harm, except a terrible fright that made me dream of bears for many a month to come. One of the little puppies was given to me, and I took a great deal of trouble in rearing it, for at first it was too young to lap, and I had to put the milk down its throat. That puppy is old Hylax there."

"But, father," said Rhodium, who was always on the look-out for stories, "you spoke of another dog that was as old as Hylax. Tell us about him."

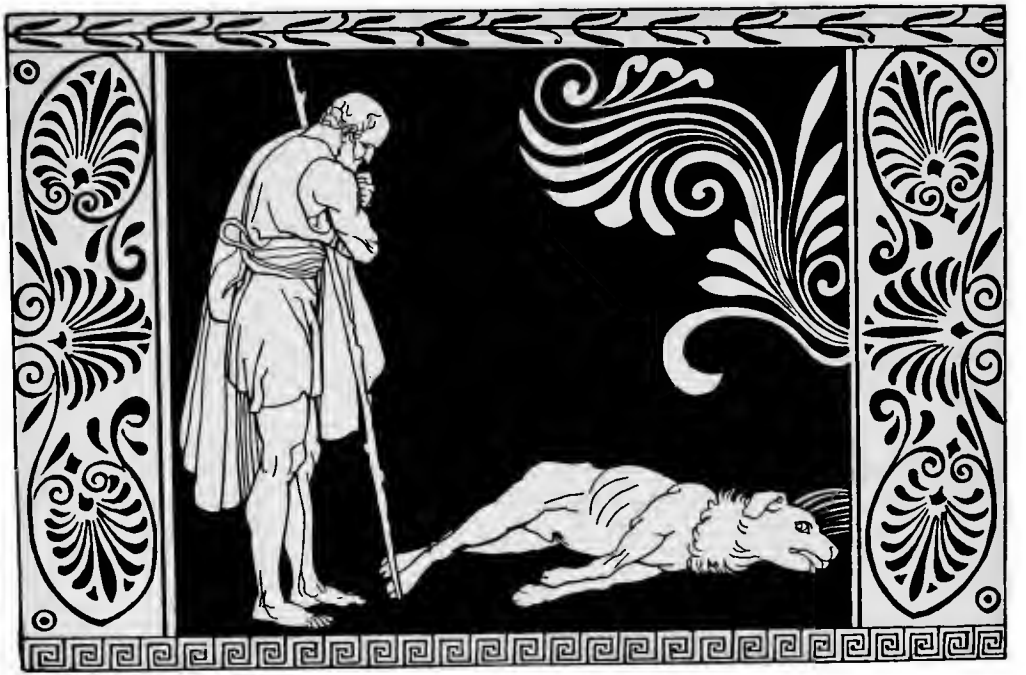
"Another time, my child. One story a day, or I shall have no more to tell."

But the time came that very evening. They were coming home from a walk when Sciton met them with the news that Hylax was dying. Indeed, when they came to his kennel he seemed dead. But when his master spoke to him he opened his eyes and wagged his tail just a little way, and drooped his ears just once, and then he died. When the children looked at their father they were almost frightened to see the big tears rolling down his cheeks. Before they went to bed he told them this story.

THE STORY OF ARGUS.

"Once upon a time, all the kings and chiefs of Greece went to fight against a great city called Troy. Ten years they fought against it, and when at last they took it, many of them had great trouble in getting home again. And of all none had greater trouble than a certain Ulysses, who was king of an island in the Western Sea. He wandered about for ten years, and all his ships were wrecked, and all his companions perished, so that when he did get back at last he was quite alone.

"And, I am sorry to say, he found great trouble at home. Most people thought that he must be dead, for, you see, he had been away from home twenty years, and for the last ten nothing had been heard of him. So a number of princes came and wanted his wife to choose one of them for a husband, and while she went on putting them off, for she would not believe that he was dead, they stayed in his house, and killed his oxen and sheep and swine, and drank his wine. When at last he came back no one knew him; indeed, he did not want to be known, for he had to see whether he had any friends left, and to think how he was to get back his own again. So he disguised himself as a beggar, and went to one of his old servants. This man was very kind to him, though he did not in the least know who he was, and took him the next day to the palace. There Ulysses saw a poor old dog lying on a dunghill. And he said to the old servant: 'Why do they let this dog lie in this way? I can see that he is of a good breed, though he does look so wretched.'



ULYSSES AND HIS DOG.

"'Ah!' said the man, 'his master went away twenty years ago, and is long since dead, and the careless women do not look after the poor creature. Things go very wrong when there is no master in a house.'

"But the old dog—his name was Argus—heard his master's voice, and lifted up his head, and when he saw him he knew him at once. He wagged his tail, and drooped his ears, just as you saw old Hylax do this afternoon, and then he died. He had waited for his master twenty years, and he saw him at the last."

"Thank you, father," said the children.

And then Rhodium asked: "Did not Ulysses have some adventures while he was trying to get home?"

"Yes," said Leon; "and if you are good children you shall hear some of them some day."

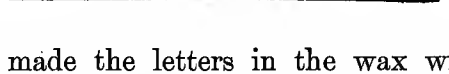
CHAPTER V.

READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETIC.

Lessons were not quite forgotten at the Marathon house, though they did not take up much of the day. Hipponax, who, you will remember, was only four, was just learning his letters, and girls, in those days, were never taught much. The children's mother, indeed, had not been able even to read and write when she was married. You must not suppose from this that she was not a lady. On the contrary, she was a very well-born lady indeed, but then she belonged to an old-fashioned family, in which it was thought quite enough if a girl knew how to spin and sew. But Leon, her husband, was not of this way of thinking, and so, as Elpinicé was very willing to learn, he began to teach her himself. She became quite a well-educated lady, and her old aunts used to

shake their heads, and hope that no harm would come of such new-fangled ways. However, no harm did come of it, and now she was teaching her own little girls. Perhaps you will ask, "What did she teach them?" Well, it is not very easy to say. You very likely are learning now, and certainly will learn some day, some other language—French, Latin, or German, perhaps all three. Nothing of the kind was thought of for our three children. No Greek ever dreamt of learning the language of any other nation. He thought far too much of his own people to do so. Of course when Greeks went to other countries as doctors or merchants, they had to use the language spoken there, but no Greek boy or girl ever learnt another language as a lesson. For the same reason they had no geography lessons. As for history, they knew a little about their own nation, but knew and cared nothing about that of any other. Then there were very few books; no story books, no children's books only one or two histories, and a very few poems. The children's mother used to read to

Gorgo some verses written by a wise man whose name was Solon, and Gorgo wrote them down on a piece of wood like a folding slate, and covered with wax. She did not use a pen and ink, but something like a skewer, with one end sharp and the other flat. Here is a picture of one.

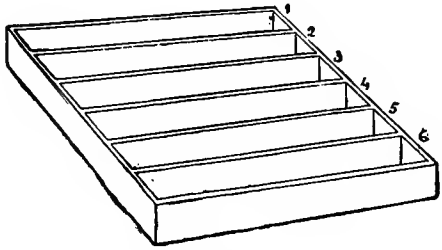


She made the letters in the wax with the sharp end, and when she wanted to rub any thing out, she took the flat end, made the wax all smooth, and wrote the word again. All the words were written in capital letters, and there were no stops. Here are two of the lines that she wrote, translated into English, but printed in the way she wrote them. See whether you can make them out.

"WHENLAWSAREGOODALLTHINGSAREORDEREDRIGHT
THEROUGHMADESMOOTHANDHEAVYBURDENSLIGHT."

When Gorgo had written the verses down, her mother would correct them, and then the girl learnt them by heart. Rhodium had an easier lesson of the same kind. Then they

learnt arithmetic. This they did by means of a kind of counting board. Here is a picture of it.



With this they used little pieces of wood or ivory, like the "men" on a draught-board or a backgammon-board. Any piece that was put into the division marked "1" counted for 100,000, in "2" it counted for 10,000, and so on till in "6" it counted for one only. When they wanted to add or subtract, they did not "do it in their heads," but really put other pieces in, or took them out. They could multiply and divide in the same way, but it would take too long to explain how. You must ask your teacher to do it, or perhaps, you might see a counting-board, for they are still some-

times made, only with differently colored balls strung upon wires.

Now, perhaps, you have had enough about lessons, and will be glad to hear a story by way of change. This is what Leon told the children when they came to him one day with a good report from their mother.

THE STORY OF ULYSSES AND CIRCÉ.

"One day Ulysses and his companions in their travels came to an island, which none of them knew. Ulysses went up to the top of a hill, and saw some smoke rising up out of a wood, and felt sure that it came from some house. Then he went back to his companions, and they cast lots who should go and see what kind of people lived in the house. The lot fell to a chief whom I shall call Broadbelt, and he went with about twenty men, and came to a house of marble in the middle of a wood. There was a garden round it, and a number of lions, and wolves, and other wild beasts walking about it. When Broadbelt and his company saw them

they were frightened, but the beasts did not try to hurt them, but wagged their tails and rubbed up against them, like so many dogs and cats. While they were looking about them, they heard the voice of some one singing inside the house. 'Hark!' said one of them, 'that must be a woman, or, perhaps, a goddess; let us call to her.' So they called to her, and she came to the door and said: 'Come in, my friends.' So they all went in, all but Broadbelt, who was afraid that she might do them some mischief, and stopped outside. Then the woman, or rather the goddess, whose name was Circé, led the men in and made them sit down on chairs, and gave each of them a mess of barleymeal, mixed with cheese, and honey, and wine. Very sweet it was, and nice, and they all ate quite greedily of it. And when they had finished it, she struck them one after another with a little switch she had in her hand, and each one that she struck became a pig, for she had mixed a dreadful poison in the mess, which made them forget all about their country and their friends.

So when they were turned into pigs she shut them up in styes, and gave them acorns and beech-mast to eat.

"Broadbelt did not know what had been done to his companions, but as they did not come out of the house again, he felt sure that some mischief had happened to them. So he ran back and told all he knew to Ulysses. Then Ulysses said: 'I must go to see after my friends,' and he went, though all the others begged him to stay.

"When he came to the house a very beautiful young man met him, and said: 'This is Circé's house. She has turned your companions into swine. Do you think that you will set them free? No; for she will make you like one of them. But stop; I will give you something that will help you, a certain flower that I know. Go into the house, keeping this flower in your hand. She will give you a mess; take it, for it will not hurt you. And when she shall strike you with her switch, draw your sword and run at her, and do not let her go till she has sworn to do you no harm.'

"Then the young man, who was Hermes, the

god, picked a plant that grew close by. It had a black root, and a flower that was white as milk. Ulysses took it and went into the house, and every thing happened just as Hermes had said. Circé gave him the mess of meal, and honey, and cheese, and wine. And when he had swallowed it, she struck him with the switch, and said: 'Go to thy stye.' But he drew his sword, and made as if he would have killed her. Then she caught him by the knees, and begged for her life. And he made her swear that she would not harm him. Then she told her servants to make ready a great feast. But before he would eat he said: 'You must turn my friends into men again.' So she went to the styes and opened the doors, and drove them out. Then she rubbed each one of them with a magic ointment that she had, and the bristles dropped off from them, and they became men again, only younger, and handsomer, and taller than they were before. And after that for a whole year Circé kept Ulysses and all the company in her house."

Rhodium said: "O father, does this wonderful plant grow anywhere about here?"

"Yes," said Leon, "I am sure that it does, though it is not so common as I could wish."

Then Rhodium cried: "Tell us its name."

"Its name is Temperance," said Leon.

CHAPTER VI.

A FRIEND.

Leon commonly had one or two guests in his house. They would come to have a day or two's hunting or fishing. Fishing could be got in a little stream that ran through the marsh on the Marathon plain; there you could find sea-fish in the part near the sea, and fresh-water fish higher up. As for hunting, there were hares on the hills above the house, and there were partridges in the corn-fields, and snipes in the marsh. But all big game, such as boars and wolves, had long ago been killed. So far the country was just like England now.

Most of Leon's friends were from Athens, but now and then there would be one from some other part of Greece, and Gorgo, who was very observant, and had sharp ears, noticed that they did not talk quite like her father, pro-

nouncing many of their words in a different way, and sometimes using words which she did not know at all.

One day there was a pouring rain, which made it quite impossible for any one to go out. The night before a guest had come for a day's hunting; but as it was so wet he had to be amused in some other way. The children heard him and their father laughing very loud in Leon's own sitting-room, and Hipponax, who was just a little spoilt, peeped in to see what they were doing. The stranger called out in a curious broad way of talking, which was more like Scotch than any thing else that I can think of: "Coom in, youngster." And the little boy went in readily enough. Only he was too shy to go in alone, and so he dragged Rhodium in along with him, and where Rhodium went of course Gorgo was bound to follow. So all the three children stood inside the room.

Their father and the stranger had just been playing at draughts, and the children could understand from what he was saying that the

stranger had been beaten, and, half in pet and half in play, had upset the table, for there it was lying on the floor, while the men had rolled to all parts of the room.

"Come, come," said the stranger, "let us have a game at *kottabos*." (He spoke in the same broad accent, but I shall not try to imitate it any more.)

"Very good," said Leon, and clapped his hands for a slave, and when the boy came, told him to bring the things that were wanted.

Now I must tell you what sort of game this *kottabos* was. On one side of the room was put a round, shallow pan, full of water. It was about three feet across. In fact it was very like a sponging bath. On this a dozen little saucers were set to float. The players stood on the other side of the room, with little cups in their hands filled with wine, and threw the wine so as to fill the saucers and sink them. You will think it silly, perhaps, that they should have used wine instead of water. And, indeed, it was a wasteful thing to do. But then you

must remember that the wine that they used was rather thick, not so thick as to stick to the cup, but enough to keep more together than water would, when it had to be thrown some way through the air. At least this is the only reason that I can think of, but, perhaps, it was only a foolish fashion, as fashions often are foolish, to use wine.

The two friends had a wager about the number of saucers they could sink. Perhaps this was rather foolish too, but I can only tell what they did, not what they ought to have done. Some of the young men were so silly as to wager large sums, far more than they could afford to lose in this way. But Leon and his friend only staked a silver coin on each saucer, each coin being worth not quite tenpence, almost exactly the same as a French *franc*. (It was called a *drachma*, a word that properly meant a "handful," and came down from very old times when there was no money at all; and if a man wanted to sell a fish or a bird he would sell it for so many "handfuls" of corn.) The stranger was

very clever at this game, and sunk nine out of the twelve saucers, and so got his revenge, as he called it, for being beaten at draughts. In this way he won six *drachmas*, but he gave them all to the boy who had brought in the things for the game; so you see that anyhow he did not make wagers, as I am afraid some people do, because he was greedy for money.

When the game was finished, the weather began to clear up, and the stranger went out with his bow, to see whether he could shoot something; but Leon, who had a cold, stopped at home. Gorgo was quite scornful about the stranger. "How foolish he was," she said, "to be vexed because you beat him at draughts! and then how silly he was to jump about so when he managed to sink one of the saucers! And then how broadly he talked, just as if he were a Bœotian!" And she mimicked him, just as a foolish little girl that did not know any better might say, "Just like a Scotchman," for the Bœotians used to talk in this broad way.

"Like a Bœotian, my child," said Leon, "why,

that is just what he is; that is to say, he is a Platæan."

"What!" cried Gorgo, "one of that brave people who came to help us at Marathon?" for she remembered, as I hope you remember, the story that old Sciton had told her. "But, father dear," she went on, "you told me that there was no Platæa now, for that those wicked Spartans—I hope nurse does not hear me—had destroyed it and killed all the people."

"It is too true, said Leon, "but they did not kill all, for some got away before the town was taken, and Platon, for that is my friend's name, was one of them. Indeed he was one of the leaders, and but for him the thing would never have been done. Perhaps you might like to hear his story, only that you think him so silly."

Gorgo felt very much ashamed of herself, and hung her head, making good resolutions that she would never judge hastily again. She was very polite to the Platæan, whenever she saw him, nor did she find it very hard to coax him into telling his story. And this is what he told.

THE ESCAPE FROM PLATÆA.

"We had been shut up for more than a year and a half, and our food began to run short. A loaf about as big as my two fists, poor musty stuff too, a bit of salt fish or salt meat as much as would cover the palm of my hand, and half a pint of sour wine—that was a man's allowance; and we felt that something must be done. One night, when I was thinking the matter over, the prophet, who happened to be a great friend of mine, came to tell me what he had seen that afternoon. A number of doves used to build in the eaves of the temple of Hera. The prophet saw a pair of these fly round and round the town, every time going a little farther from the walls. About the fourth time a hawk pounced down on them, and one of them flew back to the temple, and the other flew off in the direction of Athens.

"'That is a sign,' said he; 'the hawk is the besieger's army, and we are the doves; and the sooner we are off by the way she went the better for us.'

"Now I should tell you that the Spartans had built a double wall all round our town, and that the space between these two walls, which was sixteen feet, was roofed over; also that little towers were built on this roof, about a hundred feet apart; also that there was a ditch on each side of the double wall. Well, there were just four hundred and forty of us in all, and at first all agreed to go; but afterwards half drew back, choosing rather to take their chance in the town. It was a good thing for us that they did, but not for them, poor fellows? Well, we made all our plans, and got ladders ready by which to get up the wall. We guessed the length that they had to be by counting the layers of bricks. One very dark night, when there was a storm of wind blowing, with sometimes rain and sometimes snow, we started. All of us had the right foot bare to keep us from slipping. We crossed the first ditch, and then twelve of us climbed the wall between two of the towers. As soon as these were on the top, six of them ran to one tower and six to the other, and killed the senti-

nels in them before they could cry out. You must understand that the towers went quite from one side of the wall to the other. No one could go outside them, but had to go through them, if he wanted to make his way along the wall. It was just this way through that the six men who ran to each tower secured. For the time all the hundred feet of wall between the two was ours, and our men went on climbing upon it without ever being noticed. You see the wind made a terrible din, and the Spartans were very bad hands at keeping watch. At last one of us knocked down a tile, and it fell with such a clatter that the guard in the next tower was woke, for I do believe that they were all asleep. Then the soldiers began to rouse up. But just at this time our friends who had stayed behind pretended to be going to break out on the other side of the town, so that, what with the noise and the confusion, the Spartans did not know what to do, and, in fact, simply did nothing. All this time our men were letting themselves down from the wall on the other side, and cross-

ing the ditch—not an easy matter, seeing that it was just covered with thin ice that was not strong enough to bear. But when they did get across they drew up in line on the other bank, and threw their darts at any one who tried to come along the wall. You see they were in the dark, while the soldiers on the walls mostly carried torches, and so could be seen. I should tell you that though the greater part of the besieging army stood still and did nothing, there was a body of three hundred men who were always ready for any thing that might happen, and it was these with whom we had to deal. I have often wondered that we got off so easy; the enemy must have been quite dazed."

"Did you all escape?" asked Gorgo.

"All but one poor fellow who was taken prisoner, and six who were afraid and turned back."

"And when you were all across the outer ditch, of course you set off running towards Athens as fast as you could?"

"Not so, dear young lady; that was just what

the enemy thought we should do. We went just the opposite way for about a mile, then turned off to the right, got into the mountains, and so got to Athens by a roundabout way. All the time they were blundering along the high road, and wondering what in the world had become of us. Ah! it is an easy thing to outwit a Spartan."

CHAPTER VII.

THE END OF SCITON.

About ten days after the death of Hylax, Sciton was taken ill. He had been at work as usual with the vines, which were his especial charge, from an hour after sunrise till noon. Then he went home to his mid-day meal. He seemed to enjoy it as usual, and when it was finished took a short sleep, as his custom was. This mid-day sleep was almost the only way in which he seemed to allow that he was not quite so young as he had been. When he woke, instead of rising to go back as usual to the vineyard, he sat still. The daughter who lived with him, a middle-aged widow who had lost her husband many years before at Coronea,[1] was quite surprised. She had never known him to

[1] A battle between the Athenians and Thebans in 441 B.C. (about twenty years before the date of this story).

do such a thing before, for indeed the old man had never had a day's illness. "My work is done," he said, in answer to her look; "I will sleep a little more." "Take a little wine first," she said; and she poured out a little from a jar which Elpinicé had given her for the old man's use. She put a little hot water to it and a spoonful of honey. Her father took a mouthful, and then settled himself to sleep. Pheido—that was the daughter's name—watched him for a few minutes till she saw that he was asleep, and then hurried to the great house to tell the master and mistress. There was something in her father's look and voice that made her feel quite sure that there was a change coming.

It so happened that the family doctor from Athens had come over the day before to pay his usual monthly visit. There was little hope of doing any thing for an old man of ninety; but still, every one was anxious to make things as easy as they could for him. When the news came, the doctor, who happily had found nothing for him to do in Leon's family household,

had just come in from a walk. But it would not have been proper for him to visit the sick man in his walking dress. He went at once to his room, and put on a perfectly clean white robe. He had not been wearing any rings, but now he took two very handsome ones out of the case in which he carried his instruments and medicines; and he did not forget to put some scented oil on his hair, and brush it very carefully. You must not think that he took all this trouble because he was a fop, and wanted to look fine. Not so; it was a rule with him to please his patients. "They must not see any thing that is not pleasant, as far as it can be helped," he would say; and he took just as much trouble in this way for the poorest man or woman as he did for rich people.

When the doctor was ready, Leon and Elpinicé went with him to Sciton's cottage. The old man was now in bed, and did not seem to notice their coming in. The doctor sat down on a stool by his side, and felt his pulse. When he found how weak it was, he

looked grave, and took a little bottle out of his case. He poured something out of this into a silver cup. This had a long spout, so that it could be easily put between a patient's lips. "Drink, father," he said into the old man's ear; and, at the same time, with the help of the daughter, who was standing on the other side of the bed, he raised him up a little. Sciton swallowed the draught. A minute or two afterwards a little color came into his cheek, and he opened his eyes.

He looked round the room, and his eye lighted up a little when he saw Leon. Still he seemed to miss something. Elpinicé guessed what he wanted, and whispered a few words to the maid whom she had brought with her. "He shall come, father," she said to the old man, for she knew that he wanted the little boy. It was easy to see, from the restful look that came into his eyes, that she had guessed right.

"I would make my will," he said. The doctor had his tablets and stylus out directly, for he was used to do this office for his patients.

It was very short. "Let Leon, son of Hipponax, see that all I have be divided between my daughters. Only let Pheido, seeing that she is the elder, have the choice of such one thing as she may best like. The gods have not given me a son, therefore I give my shield to Leon; let him hang it, if he will, in his hall. My sword I give to Hipponax, son of Leon."

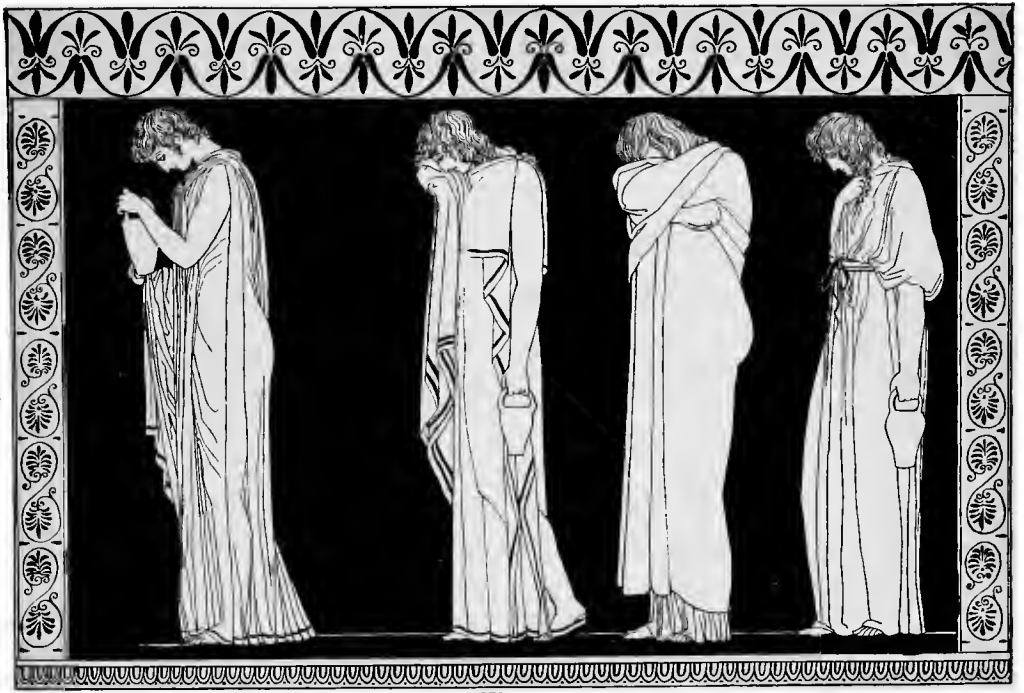
Just as he said these last words, the maid came back, leading the little boy by the hand. The old man beckoned to her to bring him to the bedside. Then he said to his daughter: "Fetch me my sword." She went and took it down from where it hung over the fire-place. "My son," said the old man to the little boy, "take this, and the gods give you strength to strike many a good blow for your country." Then he laid the weapon across the child's outstretched arms, put his right hand on the little fellow's head, and kept it there for about a minute. His lips were moving, but no one could hear what he said. When he removed his hand, Elpinicé signed to the maid to lead the

child away. He marched out, looking solemn, but very proud, with the big sword still upon his arms. He could only just carry it.

For a little time Sciton lay with his eyes closed. Than he began to talk quickly. He was fighting his first battle over again. These were some of the words they caught: "Not quite so fast, master; I cannot keep pace with you. . . . See, that rascal is bending his bow. . . . He has it. . . . It is nothing, a mere scratch. . . . Lean on me, master till you can fetch your breath. . . . Dead! no, it is impossible; he was stronger than I." He opened his eyes, and his look fell on Leon. His face brightened in a way that none that stood there had ever seen before. "They told me you were dead, dear master, and here you are, sound and well. It is well; we will have another bout with these Persian dogs, if Arés please." He thought he was speaking to the young master by whose side he had fought some seventy years before on the Marathon plain. Perhaps he did see him, but not there. The next moment he

had fallen back. There was the same happy look upon his face. The old Marathon hero was dead.

The next day Leon and his wife went to take a last look at the old man. He lay in a coffin of rough pottery work; a copper coin was between his lips; and between his hands, which were folded on his breast, was a cake made of flour, honey, and poppy seed. Perhaps you will ask what the coin and the cake were for. Well, it was the custom to put them there, and the reason of the custom was this. People believed that when a man was dead, his soul had to be ferried across the river that was called the Styx, and they put the coin in his lips that he might be able to pay the ferryman his fare for taking him. And they believed also that when he got across the river he would come to a narrow place in the way, where there was a very fierce dog with three heads, which would tear him in pieces unless it could be kept quiet. So they put the honey cake in his hands that he might throw it to the creature. You see the



THE FUNERAL OF SCITON.

poppy seeds in it would make the dog fall asleep. I do not suppose that Leon, or indeed that many people, believed these silly stories. But old customs often last long after there has ceased to be any reason for keeping them up. Flowers and herbs of various kinds, of which parsley was the chief, were strewed on the body. The two daughters sat by the bed of death, for, besides Pheido, he had another daughter, who was married to a coppersmith in Athens. Now and then one or other of them would raise a shrill cry. Their hair hung down loose over their shoulders.

Early in the morning of the next day Sciton was carried to his grave. A Marathon hero was not to be buried without some honors. Six noble youths had come from Athens to bear his coffin; and two of the chief magistrates, with six of the principal inhabitants of Marathon, walked behind. Leon was there, leading little Hipponax by the hand. And behind the men walked the two daughters and Elpinicé. Last of all came four flute players. Of course the

poor were not commonly buried with so much state; but then Sciton was a Marathon hero. The grave of the old man was in a place where he had often liked to sit in his lifetime. It was under an old olive-tree on the brow of a hill, from which you could see the Marathon plain and the battle-field. The coffin was put into a little vault made of bricks, and with it were a few little things such as cups and jars. Before the vault was closed up, Leon called out three times in a loud voice:

"*Sciton, Sciton, Sciton.*"

Then all the party went back to Leon's house, where there was a feast given to the visitors from Athens and from the village. The dead man was supposed to be the host. Before they began to eat and drink, Leon poured out some wine from a cup upon the ground, saying: "Sciton offers this to Zeus the Protector, and to Athene, keeper of this city, and to all the gods and goddesses." Then he filled the cup again, and drank to the company, saying: "Sciton bids you welcome, and wishes you health and prosperity."

CHAPTER VIII.

A VOYAGE.

About ten days after Sciton's funeral, Leon said to his wife: "We must take the children to see Salamis before the summer is quite over. I had hoped that the old man would go with us and fight another of his battles over again. Well, that was not to be; the Fates spun his thread out to the very end,[1] and we must not complain. Anyhow, we will go. And it will be more pleasant, I think, to make a little sea trip of it. I met my friend Glaucus yesterday, and he will lend me his yacht. We will start early the day after to-morrow, if you can get ready by then,

[1] The Greeks had a notion that there were three sisters, whom they called the Fates, that settled the lives of men. One held the distaff, another spun the thread from it, and the third stood by with the scissors, ready to cut it when the time was come. So Milton writes:

> Stands the blind fury with the abhorred shears
> And slits this thin spun life.

stop for the night at Peiræus,[1] take a couple of days at Salamis, and then home again in the same way."

Elpinicé promised to have every thing ready at the appointed time, and the children, as you may suppose, made no objection. The sun was just rising on the appointed day when the party started. Nurse, of course, was one of them, and Elpinicé had her own maid, not the fine lady about whom I told you a little time ago, but a young girl who she thought would be a more pleasant companion, and would not grumble if they had to rough it, as they very likely might. Then Leon had his own servant, a middle-aged man, who used to dress him, cut his hair and nails (no Greek gentleman ever thought of cutting his own nails), and generally look after his comfort. Lastly, there was an elderly man whom we may call the butler. He had the charge of the provisions, for the expedition was to be something of a picnic; he

[1] This was the chief harbor of Athens, and was between three and four miles from the city.

carried the purse, and paid all the expenses, for which he afterwards would account to his master, and generally managed the whole affair. The father, mother, and children, together with nurse, went in the mule carriage, and the servants followed in a wagon.

It was a bright morning, near the latter end of August, and the children cried out with delight when they saw the yacht, all ready to start, fastened to a little stone pier in the bay of Marathon. She was about forty feet long, and what we should call half-decked—that is, about six feet at the head and fourteen or fifteen at the stern were covered over, while the middle part was open. There was a little cabin under the after-deck, in which the passengers might take shelter, if the weather should happen to be bad, and which also contained cupboards and lockers for provisions, wraps, and any thing else that might be wanted on the voyage. The deck itself had some very comfortable cushioned seats upon it.

The yacht was a sailing vessel, and carried

upon its mast one great sail that reached nearly two thirds of its length, besides two small ones that were fastened to the bowsprit. There were also sweeps, that is, very large oars, which could be used when the weather was quite calm, or when the yacht had to be taken in or out of harbor. She was called the *Xantho*, and had for her figure-head a very prettily-painted half statue (that is, a figure cut off at the waist) of a sea-nymph, with bright golden hair and a light blue mantle just wrapped round her shoulders. On the middle of the after-deck, under a little roof, were two small figures of wood, gilded. These were images of the twin brothers, Castor and Pollux, who were thought to be the great protectors of ships and sailors. The crew consisted of a captain, who commonly steered; a mate, who had special charge of the sail; and six men.

The weather was delightful, and the wind exactly what was to be wished. It blew steadily from the west, and so, coming as it did from the shore (for the Marathon coast looks to the east),

carried them along quickly without raising big waves. Even nurse, who did not like the sea at all, and had been sure before she started that she should be very ill, felt quite comfortable. The captain, who had no trouble to keep the vessel straight in its course, was as cheerful as possible, and the sailors, who had next to nothing to do, sang songs. The children were in a state of the greatest delight, though the two girls rather envied their little brother, who ran and clambered about just as he pleased, while they, of course, had to sit quietly and properly by their mother on the deck. The sailors petted the brave little fellow, and helped him to climb the rigging, rather to the terror of his mother. But he held on to the ropes like a little squirrel, and as he had not a thought of fear, and was not in the least giddy, there really was no danger. Every now and then he would run back to the stern deck, and tell his mother that he had quite made up his mind to be a sailor.

All went well as long as they were running

down the coast from Marathon southward. But if you will look at the map of Greece, you will see that there is a point, now called Cape Colonna, where the coast ends, and that when a ship has got round this point, if it wants to go to Athens, it would have to sail nearly northwards. The west wind would not serve them badly, for of course with a side breeze you can sail either way you please; but the sea would be rather more rough. But that day it seemed as if they were to be wonderfully lucky, for just as the *Xantho* rounded the point the wind shifted to the south.

"Here 's a stroke of good luck," said Leon to the captain, "the wind now is blowing due aft, and will carry us to Peiræus in no time."

"Very good, sir," said the captain, "if we don't have too much of it; but I don't much like the south wind, and I don't like at all these sudden changes. There is something coming, sir, that we shall not like."

The captain was quite right. Something was coming. Nothing changes so quickly as the

sea. In less than half an hour every thing looked as different as possible from what it had looked in the morning. The sky was covered with low, scudding clouds, and the color of the sea was changed from a bright, beautiful sapphire blue, to a dull purple. The great sail was hauled down, or, as the sailors say, it would have lifted the yacht clean out of the water; only the sprit sails were kept up. If that had not been done the yacht could hardly have been steered. Even these were reefed as much as they could be. Every minute the sea rose higher and higher, and the big waves looked like wild beasts that were pursuing the ship as if they wanted to devour it. Luckily they came right behind, and did no more harm than give every one on board now and then a good wetting. But then it was necessary to keep the yacht right before the wind. If she should "broach-to," as the sailors say, that is, get sideways to the sea, the waves would break over her, and probably sink her in a very short time. The steersman wanted a strong hand and a cool

head to do this, for every now and then the wind would shift a point to the westward, and catch the *Xantho* a little on the side. Then, unless the steersman was quite prepared, she would get a little out of the straight course, and this little might easily become more. The captain had a sailor to help him hold the tiller, which was too heavy for one man in rough weather, and if he had not lost his head, all would have been well. But this is just what he did. When they had run about twelve miles past the Cape, the wind shifted to the southwest, and struck the yacht so suddenly, that the tiller was wrenched out of the hands of the men who were holding it. The sailor lost his footing, and rolled against the bulwark, and the captain, instead of getting hold again and doing his best till some one came to help him—and this would not have taken more than a few seconds,—fell on his knees before the images of the Twin Brethren, and began to pray at the top of his voice that they would help him. Happily there were people on board who did not lose their courage

and presence of mind. Leon was just at that moment coming out of the cabin, where he had been keeping up his wife's spirits. He sprang to the tiller without losing a moment, and so did the mate, and very soon they had her head straight again. But in that moment the yacht had shipped a heavy sea. After that she was lower in the water and did not rise on the waves as lightly as she had done before.

And what were the children doing all this time? The girls were sitting quite good and quiet in the cabin, each holding one of their mother's hands. She could not help being frightened, but she was a brave woman (for it is being brave to be frightened, and yet behave as if you were not), and she would not let her children see it. And they kept up because she did. As for little Hipponax, he was not in the least afraid, but laughed and clapped his hands as the big waves came rolling by. The bigger they were the more pleased he seemed to be. I believe it did the sailors a world of good to see him. They were ashamed to cry and wring

their hands, as, I dare say, some of them would have done, when they saw the fearless little fellow. So they kept steadily at work baling out the water, and doing their best to save the ship. For some time it seemed as if it would be labor lost. The *Xantho* took in more water than they were able to throw out, and got lower and lower in the sea, till Leon began to look about desperately for something in the way of barrels or spars that he could lash his wife and children to, so as to give them a chance of floating and being picked up. Some time before they had run up a flag of distress to the masthead.

Then there came another change. They found that the sea was not running so high, and the mate said to Leon: "We must be under the lee of Ægina" (which you will see in the map to be an island opposite the harbor of Athens). And so it was; the driving rain, which had hindered them from seeing much more than a cable's length, stopped for a time, and they saw the cliff of the island. And at that very moment a great ship of war, with her

three rows of oars on either side of her, rising and falling as regularly as if by clockwork, came out of the darkness. She did not seem to mind the weather in the least, but drove on through the waves straight for the harbor. She was so close that they were almost afraid of being run down; but it was very well that she was close, for she stopped when her captain saw the signal of distress, and one of her sailors threw a rope on board the yacht. It all happened just at the right moment and at the right place. Unless it had been fairly calm water just there even the big and strong ship of war could hardly have helped the little *Xantho*. As it was, a strong towing cable was made fast to the yacht, and she was dragged into the harbor, only just in time, for the water in the stern cabin was up to the children's knees when they got past the light-house at the mouth.

The captain of the war ship, who happened to be a cousin of Leon's, wanted him and his family to go with him to Athens; but Elpinicé, the girls, and the woman servants were so worn

out with what they had gone through, that when the old harbor-master asked him to come to his house close by, he preferred to go there. You shall hear about this house in the next chapter. Meanwhile, I will repeat the story of a shipwreck which Leon told his little boy before he went to sleep that night. Hipponax, you see, had thought it all good fun, even when the water came into the cabin, and instead of dropping off to sleep in a moment, as his sisters did, he could hear the story which he used to beg his father for every night.

"You remember about Ulysses?" said Leon.

"Yes, father," said the little boy, "he was the man who had the wonderful flower given him that saved him from being turned into a pig."

Then Leon told him—

THE STORY OF THE SHIPWRECK OF ULYSSES.

"For seven years Ulysses was kept in a certain island where a goddess called Calypso lived. She would not let him go, because she hoped that in time he would forget his country and

the wife and child he had left at home. But she had to let him go at last, for the king of the gods sent to her, and said: 'Why do you keep this brave man when he wants to go home? Let him depart, if he wishes so to do.' So she asked him whether he did really wish to go, and when he said yes, she gave him an axe and other tools, and showed him where some pine trees and poplars grew, out of which he could make a raft. So he set to work, and cut down the trees, and made a raft, with a mast, and a sail, and a rudder, and bundles of osiers all round to keep the waves from washing over it.

"When he was ready to start, Calypso gave him some handsome clothes and a skin of wine, and another great skin of water, and several baskets full of food. And she made a warm and gentle wind blow; this she was able to do because she was a goddess. She showed him those stars in the sky that are called the Great Bear, and said: 'You must always keep them on your left.'

"So he set his sail, and went on for seventeen

days and seventeen nights, never shutting his eyes, but always watching to see that the Bear was on his left.

"Now one of the gods hated him. This was the Lord of the Sea, and when he saw Ulysses almost at his journey's end he grew very angry, and said: 'What is this? How has this fellow managed to get so near home?'

"And he raised a terrible storm. One big wave struck Ulysses so hard, that he lost his hold on the rudder, and fell into the sea; and at the same moment the wind broke the mast of the raft. The poor man was very nearly drowned, for the fine clothes which the goddess had given him weighed him down. But at last he got on to the raft again, and sat there, not knowing what would happen to him next.

"But one of the nymphs of the sea saw him, and was very sorry for him. She rose out of the sea, and sat upon the raft like a seagull, and said: 'Cast off your clothes, and jump into the sea, and swim to land. As for the raft, let it go, for it will not help you any more. And see, take

this veil, and wind it round you; it will keep you from sinking. And mind that when you get safe to land, you throw it into the sea, and *don't look behind you when you do it.*'

"When the nymph had said this she dived under the sea and vanished. But Ulysses was afraid to leave the raft, and try to swim to the shore, for he knew that it was a long way off. Then another great wave came, and broke the raft to pieces, and he was left sitting astride on a single beam. Then he felt that he could not help himself; so he stripped off his clothes, and put the veil under his chest, and jumped into the sea.

"Two days and two nights he floated along, till he was nearly dead. On the morning of the third day he saw the land from the top of a big wave (the storm had ceased, but the waves were still very high). But when he got near he saw no place where he could land, the shore was so steep and rocky. And while he was thinking what he should do, a great wave drove him against one of the rocks. That time he was al-

most killed; but he put forth all his strength, and swam out to sea till he got outside the breakers. Then he swam along looking for a quiet place, and at last he came to a river. Then he landed, but he was so tired that as soon as he got on to the dry land he fainted away. No long time after he came to himself again. And the very first thing that he did was to throw the veil backwards into the sea, and he was very careful not to look behind him when he did it."

"What would have happened to him if he had," asked the little boy.

"He never knew," said Leon, "and he did not care to know; for he was one of the wise people who did what they were told without asking why."

CHAPTER IX.

SALAMIS.

Leon's party took a day's rest after their journey. Most of them needed it very much; the weather, too, was still too rough to make another excursion by sea quite pleasant. But when they woke on the second morning, the children found that the wind had gone down, and that the sun was shining brightly; and soon they heard with great delight from their father that they were to go to Salamis that day. Nurse was persuaded to stay at home, and though she was very unwilling to be separated from the dear children, and could hardly believe that they would be safe without her to look after them, she was not sorry to stop on dry land.

The *Xantho* was a heavier vessel than was wanted for the excursion, so Leon hired a large rowing-boat, and four more men to help his own

crew. These made up ten rowers; the mate steered; as for the captain he was so ashamed of himself that he had slipped away as soon as the *Xantho* was made fast in the harbor, and never showed himself again. Leon and his party sat behind with a gay-colored awning over their heads to keep off the sun.

While they were on their way, Leon said to the mate: "Is old Ladon alive? Some one told me in the winter that he was not expected to live."

"Yes, he is alive," said the mate, "or was ten days ago, for I saw him fishing for sardines. Yes, and there he is this very moment," he went on, pointing to a little rock jutting out, where there was an old man sitting, with a long rod in his hand.

"Let us go and see whether he will come with us," said Leon. "It would be a thousand pities to see Salamis without old Ladon."

The mate then pointed the boat's head to the shore, taking care not to disturb the water where the old man was fishing. To have done that

would have been to put him out of temper for the rest of the day. So they landed about a hundred yards away from the rock, and then made their way to it along the shore. The old man was so intent on his fishing that he did not notice their coming. A basket half full of the bright silvery little sardines was by his side, and every now and then he caught another, which a little boy—his great grandson, as the mate whispered to Leon—took off the hook.

"Hail! Ladon," said Leon.

"Who wants me," said the old man, without turning his eyes from the float which he was watching.

"Leon, son of Hipponax."

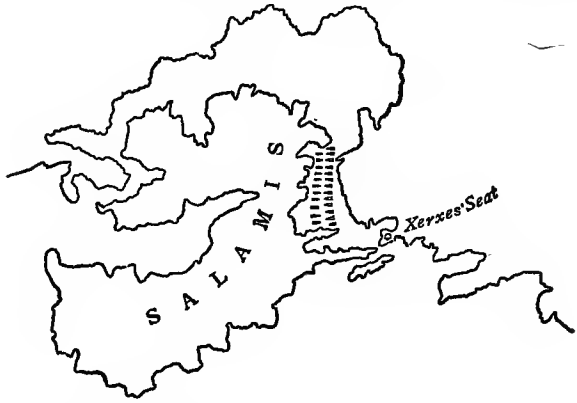
The old man stood up and made a salute. "The good son of a good father!" he said, "the gods preserve you, my son! How can Ladon serve you?"

"Come and show us Salamis," said Leon, "and tell us the story of the battle."

Nothing could have pleased the old man better. He seemed to grow young again at the

thought. No one would have thought him of the age he really was, close upon eighty.

"Come with me," he said, and led the way up the steep side of the hill so quickly that some of the party could scarcely keep up with him. In a short time they came to a flat place



about as large as a tennis lawn. It was about five hundred feet above the sea. On their right hand the hill rose many hundred feet higher, on their left and behind them there was the city of Athens, with all its beautiful temples, and its harbors full of ships. But it was the view in front of them that they came to see.

If you will look at this little map it will help you to understand what the old man told his friends. (You will have guessed that he had himself fought in the battle.) I need only tell you that the line of Greek ships is to the left and the Persian to the right.

"So you want to hear about the battle. Well, there is the place where it was fought, and this place where we are now is where the king of the Persians had his throne set, that he might see how his people fought. Well, you know what had happened before, so I need only tell you what I saw myself.

"You must know that I was in the admiral's own ship, and always used to attend upon him when he went to see the other admirals. Well, the night before the battle was fought he was at the Spartan admiral's ship, where all the principal captains were assembled. I had rowed him over in a little skiff, and was waiting for him. They had been talking for more than a couple of hours, and talking sometimes very loud too. I could hear their voices. Some-

times two or three would speak at once, and though I could not exactly make out what they said, I felt sure that there was some great dispute. Indeed, most of us knew what it was about. The Greeks from the south wanted to get away, and our admiral was very urgent that they should stop, and fight the Persians where they were. Well, my admiral came out from the cabin where the council was being held, and got into the boat. 'Back to the ship as quick as you can,' he said. There was just enough light for me to see that he looked like a man that was going to do something desperate. 'Wait,' he said, when we got to the ship, 'I have somewhere else to send you.' In about half an hour he came out of his cabin with a young man who was tutor to his children, and said to me: 'Can I trust you?' 'To the death, my lord,' I answered. 'Then row over with my friend here to the Persian admiral's ship. He has something to say to him from me.' You may guess how astonished I was. To the Persian admiral's, indeed! Why, this seemed as

if it were worse than death—it looked like treachery. However, it was not for me to object. If he trusted me I must trust him, and I knew that there was not a man who had done more for Athens, and loved her better than he. So the tutor stepped into the boat, and I rowed him as quickly as I could towards the Persian ships. I don't mind saying that I was terribly frightened. I did not much like going among the Persians. You see we had not behaved quite well to some of their messengers, and there was no knowing what they might do to us. But that was not the worst of it. It was my own countrymen that I was afraid of. You see, they would be sure to take us for deserters. And if I had known what was in the letter that the tutor was taking with him, I really do not think that I could have made up my mind to go. We had one very narrow escape. As I was rowing by the outside ship of our fleet, I heard the look-out man say, 'Halt there, runaway,' and a moment afterwards felt a great javelin whizz by within a span of my

head. However, by good luck, it missed me, and we got safe to the Persian admiral's. Our business there was soon done. It was only to deliver the letter. Very glad I was when this piece of work was finished, and we were among our own people again. My admiral went back to the Spartan admiral's ship, and there the same kind of angry talk went on for hours and hours. As for me, I was quite tired out with waiting, and fell fast asleep. I was woke by some one touching me on the shoulder. It was one of our greatest men at Athens, no friend of my admiral's, but a good man for all that. They used to call him 'The Just.' 'Tell the admiral that I would speak to him.' So I went to the cabin door and gave the message.

"You know what 'The Just' had come to say. There was no question any longer of running away. The Persians had blocked up the passage, that which you see right before you, and we had to stop and fight whether we liked it or no. We did not know then that the letter which we had carried to the Persian admiral was to

tell him that the Greeks were going to escape, and that if he wanted to catch them, he must block up the passage. And this was what he had done.

"Well, I think that everybody was relieved when the word was passed through the fleet that we should fight next morning. I know that we Athenians were delighted. By sunrise we were all ready, our anchors drawn up, and our stern-cables unfastened.[1]

"There were the Persian ships drawn up against us in a long line, larger and closer than ours, for there were twice as many of them. And we could see the Persian king quite plainly, sitting on this place where we are standing now, with a little crowd of his courtiers around him. The gold and purple which they wore were quite plain, with the sun shining upon them. I was standing, I should tell you, by the admiral's side.

"Well, we began to row out to meet the Per-

[1] A Greek ship used to have its stern fastened to the shore by cables, and its prow or fore-part kept in its place by one or more anchors.

sian ships. But there were some faint-hearted ones, who did not like the look of that great black line which seemed so much stronger than ours, and some rowed very slowly, and some stopped still, and some even began to back water. And there happened a very wonderful thing. I cannot say that I saw it myself, or that I ever talked with any one who did see it with his own eyes; but still there is no doubt that it happened. A goddess came down from the sky, and said with a loud voice: 'My good men, how much farther are you going to back water?' But it is certain, for this I did see, that in a moment every one took courage, and the whole line of our ships dashed forward as fast as the men could make them go.

"As for telling you all that happened after that, I could no more do it than I could count the waves of the sea there.[1] But there was

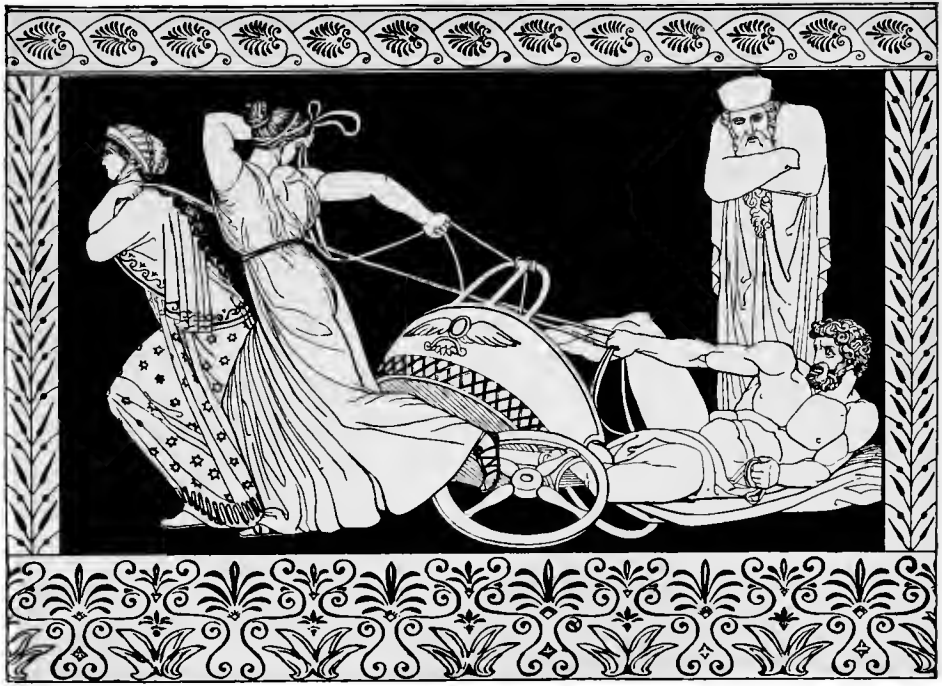
[1] The old man would not have told his hearers what they knew; but I may say that the Greek way of fighting with a ship, was first to try to sink the enemy by "ramming" them with the sharp-pointed beak of their own vessel, next to break the enemy's oars, and thirdly, when a chance was given, to board and overpower the enemy's crew.

one thing that any one could see, that we fought with one mind, and tried to help each other, and that they did not. You see they did not know each other, or care for each other; and then, they were not fighting for their own homes. But there were brave men among them too. We had a desperate fight with the Persian admiral's ship—I knew it, you see, because it was the very one that I had been to the night before. Our admiral attacked him on one side, and another Athenian ship on the other. And when we were close together, he tried to board us. He led the boarding party himself. What a splendid man he was! Four cubits and a half high,[1] with a purple turban, with a feather in it, on his head, and a silver coat of mail, and a large curved sword. How he swept about with that sword! I saw him cut one man's head clean off. And his coat of mail turned a great many blows. At last our admiral ran him through the neck with his spear. When he was dead his people stopped

[1] This would be nearly seven feet.

fighting. They always did that. You see they are not equal and free as we are. One is master with them, and all the rest are slaves. And when the master is dead, the slaves are good for nothing.

"But the most wonderful thing that I saw that day was done by a woman. She was the queen of a city over there, I was told, and she had come to help the Persian king. We saw her standing in the stern of her ship, with her long hair, just the color of gold, over her shoulders, and a helmet on her head, and a spear in her hand. There was a Greek ship pursuing her vessel, and when she saw that she could not escape, she told her steersman to ram another ship that was close in front of her. And so he did, and sank it too. It was one of her own friends; but that did not matter to her. When the people in the Greek ship saw this, they left off pursuing, for, of course, when they saw her sink an enemy, they thought that she must be a friend. Our admiral knew better, but he always liked to see a clever thing, and I heard



ATOSSA'S DREAM.

him mutter to himself: 'Well done! well done!' Still, he would have a try to take her himself, for he thought it a most impudent thing that a woman should presume to attack Athens. But we were too far off. So she got safe away, and I heard had praises and presents without number from the Persian king. 'My men are become women, and my women men,' he said. Of course he never knew but that the ship that she sunk was really a Greek; not a single man of the crew lived to tell the story. That was the most wonderful thing that I saw; but it was a great day."

"Ah!" said Leon, "the old Persian queen's dream came true."

"What was that, father?" asked Gorgo.

"One night, after her son had been gone several months, she dreamt that she saw two sisters, both the most beautiful women she had ever beheld. One was dressed like a Persian and the other like a Greek. And it seemed to her that her son tried to harness them in his chariot, and that the one in the Persian dress

was very quiet, but that the other struggled very fiercely, and turned round, and tore the harness to pieces, and broke the top of the chariot, so that her son was tumbled out of it on the ground. That was the queen's dream."

"And it served him right," said Hipponax, "for trying to harness a Greek lady like a horse."

"Why, my son," said Leon, "I saw you harnessing Rhodium only the other day."

"But that was only in fun, and besides, I am a Greek boy, and not a cowardly Persian."

After this the party went down to the boat again, and rowed over to the island of Salamis, and saw all the places that the old man had talked about from close by. It was almost dark when they got back to Peiræus after a most delightful day.

CHAPTER X.

THE PEIRÆUS.

THE Peiræus was a delightful place for the children. Hipponax was handed over to the care of a young slave, a lad of seventeen, and in his company wandered about the docks, and looked at the ships from all parts which were taking in cargo or putting it out. Trade was very brisk just then, as it will be when there is peace after years of war, and the harbor had never been so full before. A great many of the ships came from Egypt; more, indeed, than from any other country. I will tell you some of the things which these ships brought. First, there was wheat. You must know that Attica, that is the country of which Athens was the chief city, was like England in this that it did not grow wheat enough for its own people. In the first place it was quite small, about as big as Berk-

shire in England, or a little more than half as large as Rhode Island in the United States, which American children will know to be the smallest of the States. And then the soil was very light and poor, not at all suited for growing corn. Lastly, the number of people that lived in it was very large, perhaps as many as half a million. So they had to buy most of their food from abroad.

The next thing that the ships from Egypt brought was paper. This was made from a kind of reed that grew in the Nile. As Athens was a great place for books, a large quantity of paper was wanted. But you must know that when I say "a great place for books," I mean only as compared with other towns at that time. Very likely in all Athens there would not be as many books as you may see in one bookseller's shop in London or New York.

A third thing that was brought from Egypt was wine. It was very poor, thin stuff that they made in Attica. Then there were dried fruits, especially raisins, and spices, though

these were not grown in the country, but imported from Arabia and India, and linen goods, and other things which I will not tire you by mentioning.

Another place from which ships came was Carthage. (You will not find that name in the map now, but if you look in North Africa you will see Tunis, which is within a few miles of the place where Carthage once stood.) One of the chief things that was brought from Carthage was ivory. The African hunters used to bring great quantities of elephants' tusks to that city, for in those days there were wild elephants over all the north of Africa; now you must go south of the great Sahara desert to find them. Many of these tusks the people of Carthage used to send to Athens, where ivory was much used. The very finest statues used to be made of gold and ivory. Wines also and dates came from the same place. But of all things nothing astonished Hipponax more than a little negro boy. Negro slaves were just coming into fashion at Athens, and some rich lady had made her hus-

band get one for her. This whim of hers had cost him a great deal of money. "Two talents," Hipponax heard some one say, and this meant about £400 or $2,000 of our money. How Hipponax stared, and, indeed, how every one stared, to see the little fellow's woolly hair, and shiny black face, and white teeth which he was always showing. No two things could be more different than a Greek with his fair skin and straight nose, and a jet-black, flat-faced negro.

When Hipponax had seen the little negro boy taken away by his new master's steward, with a whole tribe of street boys in his train, there was another strange thing for him to look at. One of the two "state ships" came into the harbor. These two "state ships" used to carry ambassadors backwards and forwards. If the Athenians made an offering to some famous temple in a foreign country, as they sometimes did, one of these ships would carry it. Also they used to carry the money for paying the soldiers and sailors who were serving abroad, and to bring any gold and silver that was to be paid into the

treasury at home. Every thing about them was as handsome as possible. The sails were beautifully white, the hull gayly painted with light colors, and the figure-heads were images of the goddess Athene. The steersman wore a fine purple cloak, and the crews were the best that could be picked. No one that was not a free Athenian citizen was allowed to belong to them. The ship that was now coming up to the side of the quay brought an ambassador whom the great king of Persia had sent to settle some matter in dispute between him and Athens. There was quite a crowd gathered to see the great man land. Very fine he looked with his turban of red and blue, his richly embroidered cloak, and heavy gold ornaments around his neck and arms. He was carried ashore in a litter borne by six stout slaves; and two more men walked behind, holding a huge umbrella, made of cloth of gold, over his head. He had a vast quantity of baggage with him, enough to fill a small wagon; and the people who stood round, when they saw small heavy bags brought out of the

ship and put into the wagon, whispered that these held Persian gold. The Athenians were always thinking about Persian gold.

It would not have been thought proper for Gorgo and Rhodium to go about the docks, as their brother did; so they had to be content with what they could see from the roof of the house.

But in the evening all the children had the pleasure of hearing their host, the harbor-master, spin them some sailors' yarns. He had made many voyages in his youth; indeed, there was not a man in Athens who had travelled to such strange and far-off places. You shall hear some of the things that he told them.

THE HARBOR-MASTER'S YARN.

"Some forty years ago, when I was a young man, I went on a voyage to a trading place that the Carthaginians have on the western side of Sicily. Well, we were nearly there when there came on a storm from the east, and carried us far away from the land. For three days and three

nights it went on without stopping, and we could make no head against it. It was as much as we could do to keep ourselves afloat, and as to where we were we had no more notion than so many babies, for we could see nothing of the sun by day, nor of the stars by night. Just as it was getting dark on the fourth day we found ourselves near the shore. The wind dropped very suddenly, and as there was a very handy little bay in sight, we thought that we could not do better than land. So we made the ship fast, and went ashore. We were regularly tired out, for we had not had any sleep since the storm began, so we threw ourselves down on the sand, wrapped in our cloaks, and fell fast asleep. We did not so much as set a watch, though this was very foolish, for there might have been wild beasts or savages. Well, in about six hours' time, when it was beginning to get light, one of our party woke us by crying out, 'It is gone! it is gone!' 'What is gone?' said our captain, sitting up, only half-awake. 'The sea is gone,' said the man. We were all awake by that time.

Sure enough it was true. It was a rather misty morning, and we could not see the sea anywhere. Our ship was there high and dry, fallen over on its side, and the anchor, which we knew we had dropped into fairly deep water the night before, quite plain to see upon the sand."

"Well," asked Hipponax, "did the sea ever come back?"

"O yes, it came back sure enough, and afterwards we found that it goes and comes like that twice every day."

"Did you find any savages there?" asked Gorgo.

"O yes, and did some good trade with them."

"But how did you understand each other? Did they talk Greek?"

"Talk Greek! no, indeed. They chattered away like so many birds or monkeys. Still we got on very well with them. We used to put what we had to sell on the shore, and light a fire, and then go back to the ship. And when

the people of the country saw the smoke, they used to come to the place, and look at the goods, and put by them so much gold as they thought they were worth. When they had done this, they went away. Then we used to land, and if the gold seemed as much as we were likely to get, we took it and sailed away. But if we thought there was a chance of getting more, we went back to our ship and waited. Then the people used to come down, and put down some more gold, and so it went on till we were agreed."

"Have they much gold, do you think?" said Leon, who was as much interested as his children in what the old man had to tell.

"Plenty, from all that I have heard. One of their tribes, I have heard tell, makes the chains which the prisoners have to wear out of gold. But what these people used to bring was always in dust or very small bits. They find it, I was told, in their rivers."

"Did you ever see any strange kind of people among them?" asked Leon.

"Well, I never saw any thing very much out of the common with my own eyes, but I heard of some curious things. In one part there is a tribe of dwarfs, most of them not more than two cubits high. A man of three cubits [a little more than four feet and a half] is quite a giant among them. Then there are some who are covered all over with hair. They are called Gorillas; some sailors from Carthage, I have heard, once caught some of them. They could not lay hold of any of the men, they were too nimble and swift-footed; but they caught two of the women, and brought them on shipboard, meaning to carry them home to Carthage. But they bit and scratched so, that the sailors had to kill them. All that could be done was to take their skins; and these I have seen with my own eyes hanging up in one of the temples. But the most wonderful thing that I ever heard tell of was a tribe that use their feet to shade themselves from the sun."

"What?" said all the children in a breath.

"Well, the story is this. There are no trees

in that part of the country, and the gods, to make it up to the people and to keep them from being scorched to death, have given them such large feet that a man has only to lie down on the ground and hold one of his feet up between him and the sun, and it keeps his head and the rest of his body in the shade."

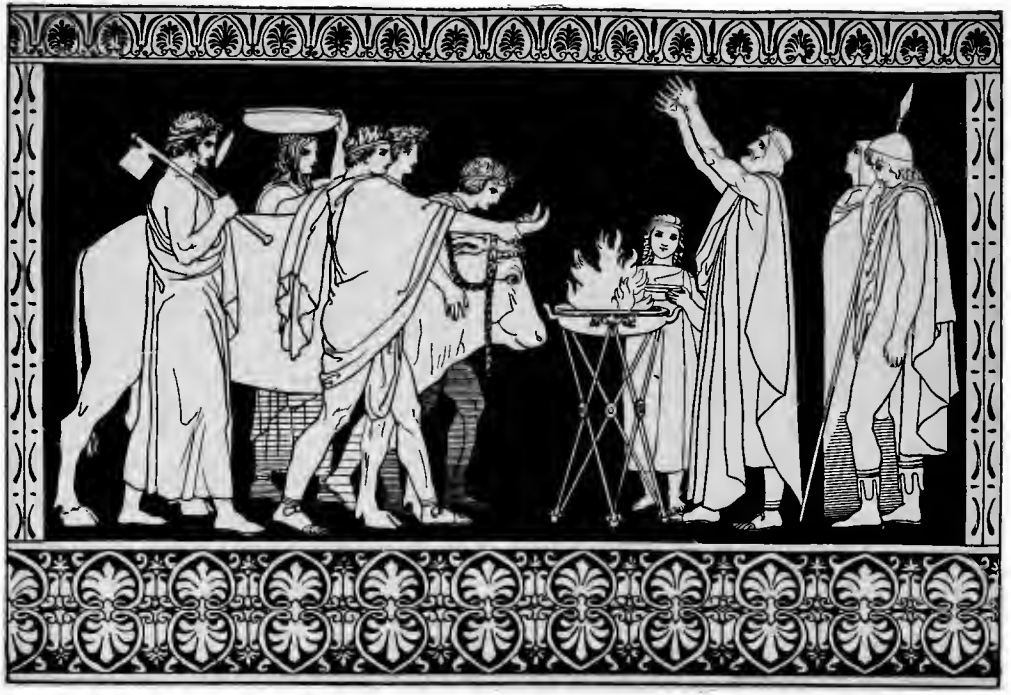
CHAPTER XI.

A FAMILY SACRIFICE.

THE next day was to be a very important one for Hipponax, for he was to be present for the first time at a family sacrifice. Leon was descended from the old Athenian hero, Theseus; and once a year all his kinsfolk used to meet at the hero's temple (which may be seen still standing), and sacrifice a white bull. The time for doing this had come round, and Hipponax was now thought old enough to be there. Leon and he started before it was quite light, for the sacrifice was to be at sunrise. When they got to the temple, it was already nearly full of people. There was a fire blazing on the altar and a priest was standing by it dressed in white robes. The first thing done was that the priest called out in a loud voice to the people: "Be silent." (What he really said was, "Speak

only lucky words"; but people thought that the best way of doing this was to say nothing at all, for they did not know what might chance to be unlucky.) Then some servants of the temple brought in the bull; it had wreaths of flowers over its neck and shoulders, and its horns were gilded. It came up quite quietly to the altar. Indeed it was thought a most unlucky thing if it made any disturbance. Perhaps the priests used to give the creature some kind of drug to keep it quiet; but if they did, they kept it a secret, for they wanted the people to think that the creature came willingly. Then one of the servants struck it on the head with a heavy axe, and killed it at one blow. This again was thought to be a most important thing. It would have been very bad luck indeed to have had to give more than one blow. Another servant cut its throat with a knife, and a third held a broad flat dish underneath to catch the blood. Perhaps you will think that this was not a very nice thing for the little boy to see, and indeed you are quite right. Hipponax

turned quite pale when he saw the poor creature killed, but his father had warned him that he must not show any sign of being afraid or of not liking it. So he thought to himself it was like being in a battle for the first time, and he kept up his courage very well; and when his turn came to do his part in the sacrifice, which was to pour some drops of wine into the fire out of a golden cup, he did it with a hand that did not tremble at all. His kinsfolk all said afterwards that he had behaved very well. Then the priest said a prayer in which he asked Theseus to help and protect the house of Leon the son of Hipponax and all his kindred, to keep them safe abroad and make them happy at home. Then some of the flesh of the bull was burnt in the fire, and some was put upon spits and broiled and eaten. In old time all the guests would have had their share, and the whole animal, except the parts that had to be burnt, would have been eaten up. But the Athenians of that time did not like this way of doing it. So some pieces of flesh were eaten for



THE SACRIFICE.

form's sake. And afterwards, later in the day, there was a great feast given in the temple, at which there were many things besides broiled meat; fish and fowl, and all kinds of meat, and pastry made up into wonderful shapes of birds and beasts and ships and temples. Hipponax sat by his father's side, and had as much as he could eat of marrow, which was considered to be the greatest dainty, and therefore most fit for a nobleman's son.

After the guests had finished their dinner and the wine had been sent round,[1] a minstrel began to sing the praises of Theseus.

I wish that I could give you the poem which he repeated; but though I cannot do this I can tell you—

THE STORY OF THESEUS.

Theseus was the son of a king of Attica. The first thing that he did was to clear the

[1] The wine was mixed with water in great bowls that stood on the tables, and from these bowls it was ladled out into drinking cups. All the cups used at this feast were of gold or silver. But on other occasions cups of earthenware and wood were often used. Glass cups were very rare.

country of some robbers who made it unsafe for travellers to pass through it. One of these used to lie in wait among the bushes on the roadside, and when he saw any one pass by, would suddenly jump out and kill him with a blow from a great iron club which he used to carry. So Theseus dressed himself up as if he were a peddler carrying a pack, and walked along the road, as if he knew nothing about the matter. But all the time he was looking out for the robber, and when the villain jumped out on him he was quite ready for him, caught him round the waist, and being a very strong man, threw him on the ground. Then he beat out his brains with his own club. This club he always carried afterwards in his own adventures.

The next robber that he killed was a cruel man who used to tie the poor people that fell into his hands to a fir tree that he had bent half-way down to the ground. When they were tied, he let the tree go, and of course it tore them in a dreadful manner. Theseus had a battle with this man and conquered him, and then served him just as he had served others.

The third robber's name was Procrustes. This man pretended to be hospitable to travellers, and would invite them into the great cave in which he lived, and would tell them that they should sleep in his own bed. But when the traveller was in bed, he would say to him: "Every one who sleeps in my bed must fit it," and if the poor man was too short he would drag his feet to make him longer, as he said; and if he was too long, he would lop his feet off. Theseus conquered him, and put him into the bed, and finding that he was too long for it, lopped off his head, for he thought it best to make an end of such a monster at once.

When Theseus had delivered his country from the robbers, he had a still more difficult and dangerous task before him. Every year seven young men and seven young women had to be chosen by lot to be sent across the sea to a certain Minos, who was king of Crete. Minos used to shut up these poor creatures in a labyrinth or maze, a place in which there were a number of winding paths so cleverly contrived

that no one could ever find his way out again. Here they used to wander about till they were devoured, one by one, by a great wild beast that lived in the maze.

Theseus, when he got to Athens, after killing the robbers, found that they were just going to draw lots for these fourteen; so he came forward, and said: "I will be one of the seven young men; so you need only draw lots for six." Then he went across the sea with his companions, and came to Crete, and to the palace of King Minos. They would not let him take his iron club with him; but he had a short sword, and he felt sure that with this he should be a match for any wild beast. But then, how was he to get out of the maze when he had killed the creature? This puzzled him very much. But by great good luck the king's daughter saw him, and fell in love with him, for he was as handsome as he was brave and strong. She gave him a thread of silk, so fine that it could not be seen, and yet so strong that it would not break. He managed to fasten this

very near the place where he went into the maze, and then he held it in his hand, unwinding it as he went. Of course he killed the wild beast, and then made his way back by the thread, and took his companions with him.

When he came back to Athens after this he was made king. They say that his old father said to him: "If you come back alive and well, let the sails of your ship be white; but if they come back without you, let them be black." Theseus was so glad to come back with all his companions that he quite forgot what had been settled about the sails. And so, when the ship came in sight of his home, it so happened that it had the black sails up. Then the old man, who had been watching for it for several weeks, threw himself into the sea. He could not live, he thought, if his son was dead.

Not long after Theseus became king an army of Amazons invaded his country. These were women who fought as bravely and as skilfully as any men. They lived somewhere on the coast of Asia, and they had crossed the sea, and

marched along, conquering as they went. But when they came to Attica, Theseus met them at the head of an army of his people. While the battle was going on he fought himself with their queen, and disarmed her and took her prisoner. Afterwards she became his wife.

Many other brave and wonderful things Theseus did, but the chief reason why the Athenians so honored him was that he made all their country into one state. Before, there had been wars of one town against another, but it was never so after his time. So he was always looked up to as the Founder of Athens.

Leon went away early from the banquet. As he came out of the temple door some one put a little tablet into his hand, whispering at the same time: "Take no notice, but look at it when you are alone." So Leon did not look round to see who it was that had spoken. Indeed, he fancied that he knew from the voice that it was a Greek from Ephesus, who lived in Athens, and kept a jeweller's shop. Leon had

done him some little service a year or so before, and the man was now showing his gratitude for it.

When Leon got home he opened the tablet, or rather the tablets, for there were two of them, fastened together with a silk thread. Inside these words were written: "*Beware! Your enemies have prevailed! Fly while there is time!*" Leon knew very well what was meant. A kinsman, with whom he had had a lawsuit about some property, had vowed that he would be revenged upon him, and had accused him to the magistrates of treason. The fact was that Leon had always been very much in favor of peace, and had sometimes been a little rash in what he did to bring it about, though always quite honest.

He showed the writing to his wife. "I shall not fly," he said. "It would look as if I were guilty."

"My brave husband," cried Elpinicé, throwing her arms round his neck.

"But the children?" said Leon.

"Of course they will stay with us," said his wife.

"Listen to me," said Leon. "I know that what I am going to say will half break your heart. But you called me brave just now; be brave yourself. The children cannot stay with us."

Elpinicé stared at him as if she did not understand what he said.

He went on: "You know Sosilas, or, rather, you do not know him. But I know what a thorough villain he is. If any thing happens to me—and though I have never had a thought but for the good of Athens, I know that they can make out some sort of a case against me,—well, if any thing happens to me, Sosilas is the children's guardian."

The poor mother turned pale.

Leon went on: "I don't say that their lives would be in danger, though you must remember that Sosilas is next heir after the boy. But what a family! what a place for our children to be brought up in! You know Ladé, what a

LEON AND ELPINICÉ.

vain, silly woman she is. Think of our dear, honest Gorgo and sweet little Rhodium under her charge! By Zeus! though I love them better than my eyes, I would sooner that they were dead."

Elpinicé sobbed as if her heart would break, but said nothing.

"Now," said Leon, "you must choose. I cannot send them away if you say no."

"They shall go," said Elpinicé. "I would sooner that I never saw them again than that they should take any harm."

"Then there is no time to lose," said Leon. "Let us take our host and nurse into council."

That nurse was dismayed at what she heard need not be said. But she was a capable woman, and had presence of mind. "Let me take them to Sparta," she said. "I have friends there, and the Spartans never harmed a guest."

It was settled that this should be done. The poor mother was obliged to tell Gorgo where she and her sister and brother were going, and something at least of the reasons. Rhodium and

Hipponax only knew that they were going on a voyage. The poor mother kept up her heart as well as she could, while the children were wild with delight at the prospect of an adventure. And, of course, she had so much to do in getting things ready that she had not time to break down. The old harbor-master, by great good luck, happened to know of a ship that was just about to start for a port not very far from Sparta. Before dawn the children and nurse were on board. By sunrise the ship had cleared out of the harbor and was well on her way. It was not too soon, for less than an hour afterwards the archers were at the harbor-master's house with an order for the arrest of Leon, son of Hipponax, and Elpinicé his wife. Sosilas himself came with them, armed with authority from the magistrates to take the children into his charge, and was wild with rage when he found them gone.

CHAPTER XII.

AT SPARTA.

The children were lodged in the house of a widow lady. She made a great favor of taking them in, for she was a very well-born person indeed, being related to one of the kings.

You must know that the Spartans had always two kings at the same time. Before I go any further with my story I will tell you how this came to be. The first king of Sparta had twin sons, but he died before they were born; so it was necessary that one of them should be made king in his stead, and this one ought to have been the elder. But when the chief men of the country asked the mother which of the two was the elder, she would not tell them. She loved them both equally, and did not want one to be put before the other. Then the chief men watched her through a little hole they had made in the wall of the room, and they saw

that she always washed and dressed one of the babies before the other. Then they felt nearly sure that this was the elder. Still, to make quite certain, they sent to inquire of an oracle; that is a place where some god was supposed to answer difficult questions, and tell men what they ought to do. And the oracle said, "Let them both be kings." And this they did, but they made the child that they believed to be really the elder First King, and the other Second King. And the children of the two were so ever afterwards. So, you see, the mother got her way. This is how the Spartans came to have two kings.

The widow lady, though she was the cousin of a king, was very poor, and was glad to have the money that was paid for the children's keep by their friends in Athens. She had three children. The eldest was a young man of about twenty, next to him was a girl of eighteen, and there was a boy of about ten. Of the eldest son, whose name was Tellis, they saw very little. He did not have his meals at home, but used to

breakfast and dine at the public tables. This custom the Spartans had in order that their men might not get fond of good living, or think too much of what they ate and drank. At the public tables all fared alike. The kings had just the same food as the common man, only they had twice as large a share, which they might eat if they could, or give away if they pleased. Very plain food it was that was served up at these public tables; perhaps *we* should have called it nasty. There was some black broth. It took a long time before any one who was not used to it could like that. And there was very coarse bread, made of barley meal; meat only half cooked, and about a pint of sour wine for each man. One day Tellis came home laughing very much at something which a stranger had said, who had been a guest at one of their tables that day. "I saw he made wry faces at the broth, and could hardly get a spoonful of it down. So some one said to him: 'Friend, you have forgotten to bring your sauce with you, 'Sauce,' he said, 'what sauce?' 'Hunger,' said the

man. We all laughed at that. Before he went away he thought he would have a laugh at us. So he said to the friend who had brought him to the dinner: 'I always used to admire you Spartans for being so brave, and not being afraid of death. But I don't think so much of you now.' 'Why so?' said his friend. 'Because I think that any one would rather die than go on eating such dinners as these all the days of his life.'"

The next day the stranger came to call upon the lady with whom the children lived. His father had been a friend of her husband's. The children did not see him to talk to, but they caught a glimpse of him. He had a gown of fine purple color, reaching down as far as his ankles. Even at Athens this would have been thought very foppish, and at Sparta, where the men wore a short woollen mantle of some quiet sober color, it looked very odd indeed. His sandals were tied with crimson strings, and he had a broad-brimmed hat, white with a red rim. And they could see that his fingers were

covered with rings, and that he had bracelets on both his arms. After he was gone they heard something about him from their hostess; that he came from a very rich and luxurious city in Italy, and that his family had always been the richest and most luxurious in it. It was an ancestor of his who, when he came to court a princess in Greece, brought a thousand cooks and fishermen and fowlers with him, and who when he was an elderly man used to boast that he had not seen the sun rise or set for twenty years.

The children asked how he had managed that. "Why," said their hostess, "he used never to get up till after the sun had set." Little Hipponax opened his eyes very wide when he heard this, and said: "What a curious man! that is just the time when I always go to bed."

One day Tellis came home looking dreadfully hurt. Two slaves—helots they used to call them—were holding him up on each side, and his face was all scratched and bloody. For

some time the children saw nothing of the widow, who was busy all day attending to her son. Gorgo was quite concerned about the young man, who had given her a tame bird and a squirrel, and always seemed kind, though she thought his manners a little rough. But his mother seemed quite pleased and proud. Gorgo said she supposed that he had got among robbers and had been hurt by them, and she hoped that they would be caught and punished.

"Robbers! my dear," said the widow, "what are you talking about. They were some of his own particular friends whom he was fighting with. There was his cousin Pauson, who is the second king's youngest son, and Myra," —and she ran through quite a list of names. "And he came out of it at least as well as any one else. He had one of his little fingers nearly bitten off, but I think we shall be able to save that; and he lost a piece of his right ear, that is quite gone; and there is very little hair left on one side of his head; and his face is scratched all over, as if a wild cat had got at

him; and his legs are black and blue with bruises. But he gave quite as good as he got. He hopes, but he is not quite sure, that he scratched one of young Pauson's eyes out, and he knocked Myron backwards into the water with a blow of his fist. I am told that they thought he was dead for some time, but at last he came to. Oh! yes, Tellis did not get the worst of it by any means."

"But what did they quarrel about so dreadfully?" asked Gorgo, quite innocently.

"Quarrel, indeed! there was no quarrel," said the widow. "It is a game they have every year, and the young men would not miss it for any thing."

"But don't they sometimes get killed?" asked little Rhodium.

"Of course, my child; now and then something of the kind happens. As they say, 'you cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs.' We must leave that to the gods."

"But were you not rather afraid for Tellis?" said Gorgo.

"Afraid!" the widow almost screamed out. "How dare you say such a thing. But of course you don't know any better. If I was to be afraid of any thing, it would be that my son should not be brave. But that, of course, is out of the question with such a young man as Tellis; and, to tell you the truth, I felt quite easy in my mind after we had sacrificed the puppy. Arés never had a finer, bolder puppy sacrificed to him, and I was sure he would be on Tellis' side after that."

"So that 's what became of poor little Labrax," thought Gorgo to herself. She had made great friends with a very spirited little puppy, one of the mastiff sort, and had missed him, and never had been able to hear any thing about him. Afterwards she heard that before this yearly battle between the young men, each party used to sacrifice to Arés the finest puppy that they could find. It was a long time before Gorgo could forgive Tellis for this.

There were a good many things at Sparta that seemed quite strange to the children. For in-

stance, the daughter of the house was not at all like an Athenian girl. She used to go in and out just as if she were a young man. One day she would go with her brother and hunt wolves and wild boars in the woods of Mount Taygetus Nor did she mind sleeping out all night under any kind of shelter she could find, and, if the weather was not very cold, without any shelter at all. Her room, instead of being handsomely furnished as an Athenian young lady's would be, had nothing but a straw mattress with a rug and a bear's skin (she had killed the bear with her own spear), a tub and pitcher for washing, and a chest for her clothes, of which she had but very few, and nothing fine among them, except a robe which she used to wear on grand occasions two or three times a year. The walls were adorned with heads of boars and stags; there was a stand for her hunting spears, of which she had three or four, only just a little lighter than those which her brother used; and a peg on which her bow used to hang.

One day the family was a little startled to see

the young lady brought home on a hurdle that was carried by four helots, three or four of her girl companions following it. Commonly her mother did not seem to be afraid of any thing happening to her, and was not the least anxious when she stopped out all night on her hunting expeditions. But now she was a little frightened, and came running out at the door.

"Trouble not, mother," the girl cried, "I had a little fall."

The fact was that she had sprained her ankle so badly that she could not put her foot to the ground. One of her companions explained that there had been wrestling matches that day between six girls and six young men, that Manto had thrown two of the young men, but that the second had tripped her up as he fell, and that she had come down with her ankle bent under her. She did not seem to mind it much, but she declared that she would pay the young man out when she got well, for she thought it a very mean trick.

There was one thing that this young lady

would not do,—she would not box. She was handsome, and did not care to have her eyes blackened and her nose flattened, as would sometimes happen to girls that boxed with young men or each other. But there was scarcely any thing else that she did not practise. She could throw a dart at a mark even better than her brother, and was not far behind him in hurling a quoit, which was a great lump of iron, with a leather thong through it to hold it by. It was not thrown at a mark like our quoits; that thrower won who could send it farthest; so, you see, Manto must have been very nearly as strong as her brother, and he was reckoned to be one of the very strongest young men in Sparta. Then she could run like a deer, and she could swim across the river. Almost the only thing that she did like the girls whom the children had known was that she used to mend her brother's clothes. To be sure, that did not take her very long, for he did not wear more than one garment! I mean, not more than one at a time. Still, though she was rather rough, she was kind,

in her way, to the two strange girls; only that she could not help despising them for being so weak.

The younger boy seemed even more strange to the children than his brother and sister. One thing that they never could understand was that his mother used to give him hardly any food, just a little bit of bread the first thing in the morning, and, perhaps, nothing more all the day, and that, nevertheless, he always seemed to get on very well, and was never very hungry, and certainly never thought of asking his mother for any thing more. At first Gorgo and Rhodium thought that he must go to the public tables, but when they found that boys were not allowed at them they were quite puzzled. At last they found it out, and they were very much astonished. One day he came home looking very miserable and ashamed of himself. He sat down in a dark corner and covered his face, and would not say a single word to any one. His mother took no notice of him, neither did his brother and sister. At last, when every one

else had gone away, little Rhodium, of whom he had come to be very fond, coaxed him to tell her what was the matter. He held out for a long time, but at last he told her his story. And it was this.

"I went to get my dinner at the house of Agis the Ephor. [The Ephors, I should tell you, were very great people at Sparta. There was a council of five of them, and this council was more powerful even than the king.] I climbed up a tree which stands on the north side of the house, close outside the larder, and managed to creep through a hole in the wall which they have made to let the air in."

Rhodium opened her eyes. "What a very odd boy you are," she said. "That is not the way to go to a friend's house to have a dinner —fancy creeping into his larder? Why did you not go to the door?"

Now it was the boy's turn to open his eyes. "Go to the front door! What *do* you mean? How could I get in without being seen?"

"But why should you want to get in without

being seen?" said the little girl. "If Agis asks you to dinner why should he not see you?"

"Agis ask me to dinner! I don't believe he asks any one, the mean old wretch, and certainly no one who is poor as we are."

Rhodium could not understand it in the least. "But why did you go to dine at his house if he did not ask you? Then something began to dawn upon her; but it seemed so shocking that she could hardly bring herself to say it. "You don't mean that you went to, to *steal* your dinner?"

And she blushed quite red at having to say such a dreadful thing. She had heard of people stealing before, but she did not remember ever having seen a person who did it.

"Yes, I do," said the boy. "Of course I meant to steal my dinner; I always steal it when I get a chance."

"But is n't it wrong to steal?" said poor little Rhodium, who was as much astonished as if every thing had been suddenly turned upside down.

"Wrong, certainly not," said the boy; "but it is very wrong to be found out. And I was found out this morning. And it was all my own fault too. I had got all I wanted without being disturbed, when I saw a piece of sweet maize-pudding on a top shelf, and I must need clamber up to get it. Well, the shelf I was standing on broke under me just as I had got the dish in my hand, and I came down with such a clatter that every one in the house must have heard it. The fall, too, made me quite stupid; and before I could get up there was old Agis with two of his helots. They gave me an awful beating. But one comfort is that I did not cry out. I heard the old brute grumble to himself: 'He is pretty hard, after all.'"

"But," Rhodium said, "*I* have always been told that it is wrong to steal."

"Why—we are made to do it," said the boy. "It teaches us to be clever in deceiving our enemies when we grow up and become soldiers? and it teaches us to be brave, too, I think. Shall I tell you what a cousin of mine did?

He stole a pet fox from somebody's house. He got clear away from the house, but when he was in the street he happened to meet the man to whom it belonged. The man stopped him and asked him a number of questions, how he was getting on with his exercises, and all the rest of it; and all the while the fox was biting him as hard as it could. He did n't flinch in the least; and when the old fellow had finished his questions he could just get home, and dropped down as if he were dead. It was months and months before he got well again."

Rhodium remembered that she had been crying that very morning because her squirrel had given her a little bite, and was very much astonished indeed at this story.

Another thing that the children thought very odd about the boy was that he could not write or read, and never thought of learning to do either. But scarcely any body at Sparta did. There was not a single book in the widow's house, or picture, or statuette, or any thing to make it look pretty. And all the city was like

the house. It was like a big, ugly village. There were temples, of course, but not very many of them, and those that were there were roughly built. In Athens even the small streets were full of statues and beautiful things. Here there was nothing of the kind. Another thing that the children wondered at very much was that there were no walls. But they never forgot what Tellis said to them one day about this.

Gorgo asked him: "Where are the walls?"

"Walls!" said he; "we have no walls."

"But what do you do when your enemies come?"

"Our enemies don't come. And if they did our men would be our walls."

Gorgo could not help thinking that there was something fine about these Spartans, though they were ignorant and stupid about books.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STORY OF ARISTOMENES.

One day, when the children were out for a walk with the maid that waited on them, a sudden storm of rain came on. They ran for shelter to a house that was close by. It was a farm-house, and the farmer's wife took them into her kitchen that they might get warm by the fire. There was a very old woman sitting in the chimney corner, who was getting some wool ready for spinning. The farmer's wife whispered: "That is my husband's mother. Don't take any notice of her; for she very seldom speaks to any one." Very stern the old woman looked as she sat there, not seeming to see any thing but the wool that she was winding. For some time the children were too busy with the bread and milk which the farmer's wife gave them to say any thing. But when they had

finished it, they began to talk; and as soon as the old woman heard their voices, she turned to her daughter and said: "Who are these strangers?" "I do not know, mother," said the daughter, "but they are strangers, for their speech is not as ours." Then the maid explained who they were, and how they had come to Sparta. When she had finished her story, the old woman beckoned to Hipponax that he should come and stand by her. So he came, and she put her hands on his head, and said: "Boy, do you love the Spartans?" "No," said he, "for they are the enemies of my people." "And they have taken my people's land," said the old woman. "It is many, many years ago, but we do not forget; and some day we shall go back. Now listen to me. I don't often talk of these things, for the people about me have no spirit. There is my daughter's husband; he has his farm from a Spartan and dares not say any thing against them; but you are a brave boy, and shall hear the story of a brave man."

THE STORY OF ARISTOMENES.

"A long time ago the people from whom I came fought against the Spartans, who tried to take their country from them. They fought for many years; and sometimes one side got the better, and sometimes the other; but there were more of the Spartans than of our people; and, on the whole, they prevailed. Then our kings and rulers sometimes did foolish things. But the real reason for our being conquered in the end was that the gods would have it so. It was their pleasure that the Messenians—that was the name of my people—should be driven away from their country, and I supposed that we had deserved it. But we shall come back, we shall come back some day. Now I am going to tell you of some of the wonderful things that happened to a man whom our people made their general, after they had been fighting for several years.

"One day he heard that the women from Sparta were going to keep a feast to the goddess Demeter. So he lay in wait, he and fifty men with him, in a little wood by the side

of the road, and when the women came by on their way to the temple he and his men rushed out on them."

"But," said Gorgo, "it was not very brave of him to make war upon women."

"You see," said the old woman, who was not at all offended, but liked the girl's spirit in answering,—"you see he thought that if he could take the women prisoners, their husbands and brothers and fathers would be willing to make peace, so that they might get them back. But perhaps you are right, my child; and anyhow he did not get much good from what he tried to do. For some of the women had knives with them, the knives which they used for killing the sheep that were to be sacrificed; and all of them had spits for cooking the flesh of the sheep. So they turned on the Messenians, and wounded many of them, and even killed four or five. And Aristomenes himself they took prisoner. You see these Spartan women were very strong, for they always had the same games and exercises as the men.

"Well, when the women had taken him prisoner, they bound him with a strong rope, and shut him up in the temple, thinking that he was quite safe there, and that the next morning they would take him to Sparta. But, when they came to look for him next morning, lo and behold, he was gone. All that they could find was the rope burnt through in several places. Now, what he had done was this. There was a fire in the temple, and Aristomenes rolled over and over on the ground from the place where they had put him till he got quite close to the fire. Then he put first one arm with the rope on it into the fire till the rope was burnt through, and then the other. The fire burnt his arms dreadfully, as you may suppose, while it was burning the rope, but he did not mind that, so long as he was free again. You see, as soon as he got his arms free, he could untie the rope from his legs. If he had had to burn his legs too he would hardly have been able to escape. As it was, the Spartans could not believe that he had done it, and they would have it that the

priestess had cut the rope with a knife, because she was an old sweetheart of his, and then put it in the fire so as to look as if it had been burnt.

"Some time after this a terrible thing happened to him. He got together a great army, both of his own people and of the Arcadians who live among the hills, and who hated the Spartans just as much as he did. But the Spartans bribed the king of the Arcadians to play him false. And this he did, for in the middle of the battle he gave the signal to his soldiers that they were to run away, and so left the Messenians alone. That day Aristomenes lost nearly all his army.

"For all this he would not give in; but he and some brave men that still followed him shut themselves up in a fort that was on the top of a mountain, called Eira. The Spartans besieged the fort for eleven years, without being able to take it; indeed it would often happen that Aristomenes made his way out without their knowing any thing about it, and

plundered the country round about. At last he became so bold that he attacked a Spartan army that was marching along under one of their kings, and was at least ten times as big as his own little company. While he was fighting, some one threw a stone at him from behind and hit him on the head. The blow made him quite dizzy, and before he could recover, a number of Spartans rushed upon him, and took him prisoner. Fifty of his own men were also taken at the same time.

"The Spartans determined to put all these prisoners to death. They threw them down into a great cave that there was in a mountain near the city. All the others were killed by the fall, but somehow or other Aristomenes was alive when he came to the bottom. I cannot say how this happened. Some people tell a story of how an eagle flew under him, and kept him up with its wings. I don't know whether this can be true. Perhaps, being a very strong man, he was able to hold himself up by some shrubs that grew out of the side of the rock,

and so broke his fall. Anyhow, he was not killed: at first he thought it would have been better if he had, fearing he should be starved to death. He wrapped his face in his cloak, and sat down to wait till his time came. But after two days he heard a noise, and looking out he saw a jackal that was eating one of the dead bodies. Then he said to himself. 'There must be some hole by which that jackal gets in and out; and I will make it show me.' So he crept along as quietly as he could till he was quite close to the beast, and then he caught it by the tail. Of course it turned and tried to bite him; but he had covered his hand with his cloak, and it could not hurt him very much. Then it ran away, and Aristomenes ran with it, still holding it by the tail, till it came to the hole by which it got into the cave. It was a very small hole, but the brave hero soon made it larger by pulling away stones. Before long he was back at Eira, and very glad his followers were to see him. They had long before given him up for lost. As for the Spartans,

they could not believe their eyes when he showed himself on the wall of the fort.

"Not many days afterwards he showed that it was he, and no one else. The people of Corinth sent an army to help the Spartans to take the fort. Aristomenes thought that very likely they would be marching carelessly, especially as they thought that he was dead. And so it turned out. He came upon them as they were sleeping in their camp without any guard, and killed a great many of them. Perhaps you have never heard that when a man has killed a hundred enemies with his own hand, he offers a special sacrifice to the gods. Aristomenes did this for the second time, after he had killed these Corinthians; and they say that before he was obliged to give over fighting he did it a third time.

"Not long after this he was taken prisoner again. The Spartans made a truce with the people in Eira for forty days, and went to keep a certain feast at home. So he came out of Eira, and went about the country feeling quite safe."

"But were the Spartans so wicked that they broke the truce?" asked Gorgo, in a very indignant voice.

"No, child; I hate them, but I don't think that they would do that. There were some archers from the island of Crete whom they had hired to help. These men did not know or care any thing about the truce, and they came upon Aristomenes as he was walking without any arms, and took him prisoner. There were seven of them, and two ran as fast as they could to Sparta with the news that Aristomenes was taken, and the other five took him to a farmhouse that was close by."

"Of course," said Gorgo, "the Spartans would not have taken advantage of this, but would have let him go."

"Perhaps so," said the old woman, with a little laugh, "but they did not have the chance. In the farmhouse there lived a widow with her daughter. The night before the girl dreamed that some wolves had brought a lion to the house, that was bound with ropes, and had no

claws, and that she had loosed the lion from the ropes, and had given it claws. So when the archers came in with their prisoner, boasting what a piece of luck they had had, the girl said to herself, 'This is the lion, and these are wolves. And if the first half of my dream has come true, I don't see why the second should not come true also.' So she gave the archers a great quantity of wine to drink with their supper, and when they were fast asleep she took the sword of one of them, and cut the bonds of Aristomenes and then gave him the sword. He killed all five of them, and got safe away."

"And did he conquer the Spartans after all?" asked Hipponax, who did not understand about things very clearly.

"No, my son," said the old woman, "for Eira was taken that very year by the treachery of a bad woman; but I cannot tell you the story; it is not fit for you to hear such wicked things."

"And what became of the people that were in it?" said one of the children.

"Some were taken prisoners, and made

slaves. I am descended from one of them. But Aristomenes himself got away, and some of his brave companions with him. Of course they are all dead long since, for it is many, many years ago. But their children will come back some day, though I shall not live to see it."[1]

"I hope the wicked king of Arcadia, who took the bribe, was punished," said Gorgo.

"Yes," said the old lady; "when his people found out how wicked he had been, they stoned him to death. Aristomenes was there, but when they looked at him to see whether he was not glad to see the traitor punished, he was crying. He had a very tender heart, though he did kill so many people."

"And what happened to the girl that had the dream about the lion and the wolves?"

"Oh, she married Aristomenes' son, and lived happily with him ever after, for he escaped with his father."

[1] You will be glad to hear that the old lady was right. The Messenians did come back between forty and fifty years after this time. And the traveller, from whom we get the story that I have just told you, tells us that they were living in their own country in his time—that is to say, about four hundred and fifty years after their return.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MARRIAGE.

About a year after the arrival of the children in Sparta they had the great joy of seeing their mother again, though it was very sad to hear from her that their father was still in prison. Her friends, who were great people in Athens, had been able to obtain her release; and, indeed, there was no sort of proof against her; but the wicked cousin still prevented Leon being set at liberty. At first Elpinicé had wanted to stay with her husband, but he would not allow it. "No," he said, "go and see after the children. The best comfort that I can have will be to know that things are going on well with them." So Elpinicé came to Sparta, and after thanking the children's hostess for all her kindness to them, hired a little house to which they all removed. But they still used to see a good deal

of the Spartan family, of whom indeed they were very fond.

One day, as Gorgo was sitting with her mother, the widow came to make a call. It was easy to see that she had a great piece of news to tell. Indeed, she hardly gave herself time to sit down before she told it.

"My Manto," she said "is going to be married; a most desirable match! The young man is very well thought of as a soldier; and besides, he is rich. And it is not impossible, you know," and here she dropped her voice to a whisper, "that he may be a king some day."

Elpinicé said something kind, and hoped that the young people would be happy.

The widow went on: "I have been a little anxious; she has been so hard to please. Do you know that I have sometimes been half inclined to be sorry that she is so strong and tall? I used, of course, to be very proud that she could hold her own with the young men in wrestling and running, but lately I have been doubtful whether it was not a mistake. You

see that the young fellows don't like being beaten by a girl. A man may like a strong wife, but then he likes to be a little stronger himself. And Manto, too, she wanted a man whom she could respect, and I began to be afraid that there was not such a one in Sparta. Again and again I have said to her: 'So-and-so is a fine young fellow.' 'Pretty well,' she would answer, 'but I threw him this afternoon in the ring'; or: 'He did n't come near me in the foot race'; or: 'I had to spear a wild boar for him the other day; lucky for him that I was there, or he would have had the brute's tusk in his thigh.' You see, she thought herself too good for them, and I did n't know what would come of it. However, I am thankful to say that she has found her match at last. About a fortnight ago young Agis gave her such a fall at wrestling that she has been lame ever since; and it has positively made her quite fond of him. His father came yesterday to ask her for his son. So that is happily settled; and they are to be married at the next full moon."

When the widow was gone, Elpinicé said to her daughter: "Well, I hope our Atalanta has found a good husband."

"But who was Atalanta?" said Gorgo. So her mother told her the story.

"Atalanta was an Arcadian girl, and a great huntress. Some say that her father was so much disappointed when she was born, for he had wished for a son, that he had her left out on the mountain-side to die, and that a she-bear suckled her. Anyhow she grew up in the woods, and was wonderfully strong and swift of foot. When all the best hunters in Greece were sent to kill the great boar of Calydon, she came with the rest, and she was the first to wound it. Indeed, the hero who killed it at last was so pleased with what she did that he gave her the skin, saying that she had done better than all the others. And very angry he made them by doing it.

"Atalanta was very beautiful; and a number of princes came, wishing to marry her (I should have told you that she, when she grew up, went

back to her father). She always used to say: 'I will not marry a man who is not better than I am. Let him run a race with me. If he can beat me I will become his wife. But if not, he must lose his life, for a man is not fit to live if he can be beaten by a girl.' Some of the suitors did not like these terms, and went away to look for wives who were not so dangerous to court. But several took their chance, and suffered for it. There was no beating her; she ran like the wind. You see she had lived in the woods and was as strong as a wild creature. And when she had conquered them, she had no mercy on them. She had them tied up to a tree, and shot them to the heart with one of her arrows.

"At last a young prince, named Milanion, came. Every one advised him not to have any thing to do with her; but he had quite made up his mind, he said, and would take his chance. So they started for a race. Now Milanion was a very swift runner, and he started off at such a pace that he was soon some way ahead. Now more than one of the princes had done this,

You see it was not so much that Atalanta ran very fast, as that she never seemed to get out of breath, but went on as fast at the end of the race as she had at the beginning. After a time the prince found that the girl was overtaking him; so he dropped an apple of gold that he had hidden in his girdle. It rolled just in front of Atalanta, shining so beautifully that she could not help stopping to pick it up. That gave him time to get several yards ahead; and when she came up again he dropped another apple; and just before the end of the race, a third. And the end of it was that he came in first, and she became his wife."

"But that was not a fair way of beating her," cried Gorgo.

"Perhaps not," her mother answered, "but I dare say that it was better for her to lose the race than to win it."

When Gorgo repeated the story of Atalanta to her brother and sister, nurse remarked that Milanion must have had a very strange taste to want such a very savage young woman for his

wife. Then she went on: "Listen to me, children, and I will tell you a story of two young people who fell in love without even having seen each other."

The children were all attention in a moment, and nurse told them—

THE STORY OF CRANTOR AND RHODOPE.

Crantor was a prince of Thrace. On his twenty-fifth birthday his chief nobles came to him and said that it was time for him to marry. So he promised that he would look out for a wife. That very night he dreamed that he was at a great feast, and that a very beautiful girl was standing mixing a great bowl of wine. So beautiful a girl he had never seen in his life, and he said to himself in his sleep: "That girl shall be my wife." Most dreams we forget when we wake; but this he did not forget. And when the next night he dreamed the very same thing again he began to think that it must mean something. So he sent for his wisest counsellor, and told him what he had seen, and

asked his advice. "We must find out who she is," said the counsellor. "Tell me, if you can, how the people were dressed who were sitting at the feast." "They were dressed like Scythians," said the prince. "Yes," said the counsellor, "but there are many Scythians. Tell me something more." Then the prince remembered the kind of ornaments they had on their dress, and how they wore their hair. And the counsellor said: "These must be Scythians of the Tyras" (the Dneister). So Crantor said: "You shall go and ask the king for his daughter to be my wife; only manage to see the girl first, and be sure that she is the lady whom I saw in my dream." And he described her to his counsellor exactly as he had seen her in his dream,—her height, the color of her hair and her eyes, her dress, and every ornament that she wore. A picture could not have shown her more plainly. So the counsellor went with all the haste he could, and came to the court of the Scythian king, and delivered him his master's message. The king

answered: "I would gladly give my daughter to Crantor the Thracian, for the fame of his valor and wisdom has reached us even here. But it may not be. For see now: I have no son to come after me, nor any near kinsman. Therefore my kingdom must go to him who shall be my daughter's husband. What think you will happen should I give her to a stranger? Would the nobles of Scythia suffer it? not so. They would rebel against him, and there would be war in the land. And whether they prevailed or he, my land would suffer. Therefore my daughter shall marry one of her own people. Tell this to your master. But if I had had a son to sit upon my throne after me, nothing had pleased me better than that my daughter should be wife to Crantor of Thrace." So the counsellor took back the message to his master, and when he heard it, he was at the first much cast down, but afterwards comforted himself saying: "I shall yet have that which I desire. The gods would not have mocked me with this dream, if it had not been their will that Rhodope the Scythian should be my wife."

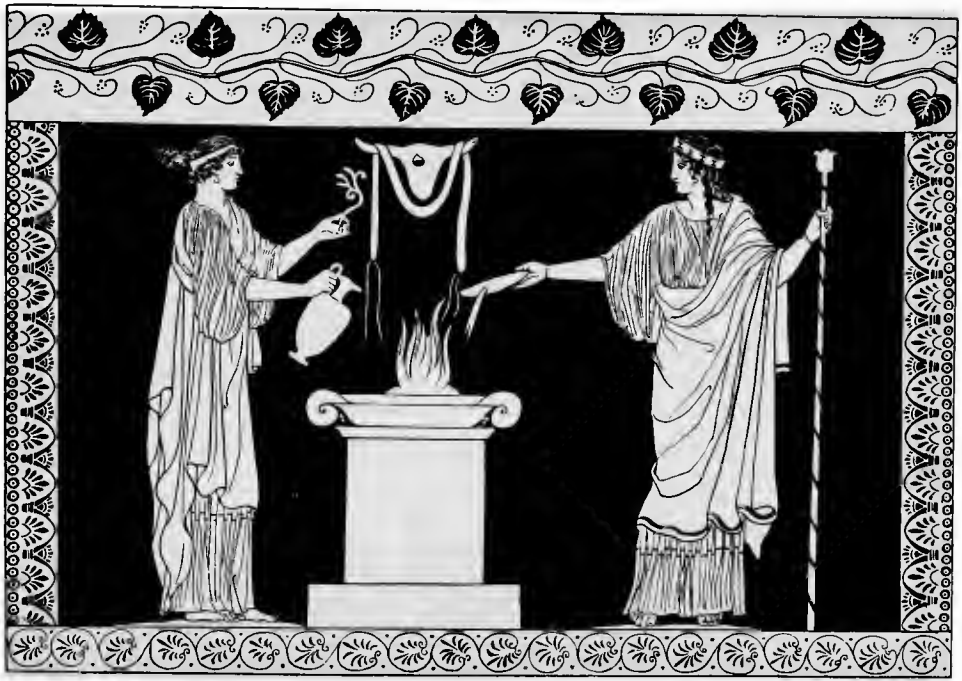
About half a year after this the father of Rhodope said to himself: "I am growing old, and I would willingly see my daughter given to some good man. It is time that this matter should be settled." So he invited all the nobles of Scythia that were unmarried to a feast. And when the feast was at its height, he sent for Rhodope his daughter to come into the hall. She came in with two of her maids with her.

Now Rhodope also had had a dream in which she saw a very tall, handsome prince. She seemed to be riding with him in a chariot across the plain, and to hear the noise of other chariots pursuing them. This dream came to her every new moon; and she thought to herself: "This prince shall be my husband; or why have the gods sent me this dream?"

When she came into the hall, her father said to her: "Daughter, look round and see your suitors. Choose whom you will to be your husband. And when you have made your choice, mix the great cup from which I drink, and from which my fathers before me have

drunk, and give it to the man of your choice." Rhodope looked about the hall to see whether she could spy out the prince of her dream. But she could not see him; and she was at her wits' end to know what to do. So she went to the table on which the cup stood, and began to mix a draught of wine very slowly, and while she stood mixing it the tears ran down her cheeks.

Now it so happened that at this time Prince Crantor had heard a report that an enemy was going to attack him, and he marched out with his army, and was encamped on the bank of a certain river that was the boundary of his kingdom. And the night before the day of the feast he dreamed again of the princess, of whom he had not dreamed since he had sent to ask her in marriage of her father. He saw her just as he had seen her before, standing by the table mixing wine in a cup; only this time he could see that she was crying. When he woke he said to himself: "She wants me; I will go to her." It was still dark when he woke; but



THE OMEN.

he had his best horses harnessed to his chariot, and drove them as fast as he could to the town where the Scythian king had his palace. It was evening when he got there. He left his chariot with the charioteer outside the town, and went into the palace, having first put on the dress of a Scythian noble. There was such an uproar in the hall that no one took any notice of him. The feast had been going on since noonday, and at this time there were few of the guests that were not half tipsy. And the first person that he saw was the princess of his dreams, standing by the table with the cups, and mixing a draught and crying as she stood. And she looked up and saw the prince of her dreams. Just at that moment the king stood up in his place, and ordered that every cup should be filled, and that every man should drink a bumper (that is the whole of his cup) to his daughter's husband. All the guests jumped to their feet, and shouted, and drained their cups to the bottom. And while they were doing this Crantor and Rhodope stole out of the hall, and ran as fast as they could to

the place where he had left his chariot. Nobody ever saw them again in the Scythian country, for they got safe away, and lived happily ever after.

Two or three days after, the widow asked Elpinicé and Gorgo to go with her on a visit which she and her daughter were to pay to a certain temple. It was a temple of Aphrodité (or Venus, as we commonly call her, using the Latin name), who was the goddess of love and beauty. The image of the goddess was the most curious old bit of wood carving that can be imagined. As for beauty, nothing could be more ugly. It had a flat nose and thick lips, and cheeks daubed with red, while the rest of the face was painted yellow. The oldest and most battered doll that any one of you ever had would be a beauty compared with this image of the goddess. But it would have been thought a most unlucky thing if a bride that was to be did not pay respect to it. So Manto put a couple of her old dolls on the knees of the goddess.

This was to signify that she was no longer a child. Then she poured a little wine into a fire that was burning in front of the image, and every one thought it a sign of good luck when it blazed up without any kind of splutter.

About ten days after this visit to the temple the marriage took place, and a very fine scene it was, though not so fine as it would have been at Athens. I wish that I could tell you how the bride was dressed. But I only know that she wore a veil which was fastened to her hair with a gold pin, and that her mother gave her as the last present the ornaments that she herself had worn—a gold necklace set with sapphires and emeralds, and bracelets shaped like serpents.

The carriage that was to take the bride to her husband's house was drawn by four handsome mules. Their harness was gilded, and their hoofs had been carefully polished. The mother lighted the torch that was carried in front. A troop of women friends of the family followed, carrying some of the presents that had been given to the bride, and singing, in concert with

another troop of young men, the marriage song. When the procession reached the bridegroom's house, the bride was lifted across the doorstep. It would have been bad luck for her to have touched it with her feet. As soon as she and her husband were inside the house, a quantity of sweetmeats and little coins mixed together were thrown at them, just as we see rice thrown nowadays when a bride and bridegroom are going away.

So Manto was happily married.

CHAPTER XV.

GOOD-BYE TO SPARTA.

For a whole year Elpinicé and the children lived at Sparta without receiving a letter from Leon. They did hear, however, two or three times from friends in Athens, that, though still shut up in prison, he was quite well. At last a letter came, and, as you will see, it brought good news. This is what was written in it:

"*Leon, son of Hipponax, to the dearest Elpinicé, greeting. Know that I am set free from prison, being wholly acquitted of the charges brought against me. But of these things more hereafter. I judge it better not myself to come to Sparta, which I would gladly do. Set out, therefore, as soon as you conveniently may; I will await you at Tegea at the house of Pauson. Kiss Gorgo and Rhodium for me, and Hipponax also, who, I trust, has not forgotten either Athens or his father. Farewell.*"

This letter was written on a strip of parchment. At first sight one would have thought that it could not be read, for the letters were straggling all over it in the strangest way. But Elpinicé rolled it round a little stick which she had, and then the letters came together into words, and the words into sentences. Leon, you see, had another stick of exactly the same size, and had rolled the parchment around that before he wrote on it. This was one of the ways in which the people in those times kept what they had to write to each other secret.

When Elpinicé had read the letter she sent for the postman, as I may call him, who had brought it. He had run all the way from Athens with it. He was a short, spare man, about thirty five-years old, and was one of the most famous runners, for a long distance, in all Greece. His family indeed had been great runners, from father to son, for many generations. When he came into the room he looked so little tired with his journey that he seemed quite ready to do it again.

"Hail, Lagopus!" said Elpinicé. "When did you leave Athens?"

"Lagopus" was the name which the runner had taken for himself. It means "Harefoot."

"At noon the day before yesterday, most worshipful lady," answered the man. He had reached Sparta about four o'clock in the afternoon.

"That is marvellously quick running," said Elpinicé.

"I know no man now alive that could better it," answered the messenger; "but it cannot be compared with what has been done by those who have gone before me. Did not Pheidippides, my grandfather, do this same journey in less than two days?"

"O tell us about him," cried Hipponax.

This was what Lagopus was very glad to do, for he was almost as proud of this famous run of his grandfather as if he had done it himself.

"More than seventy years ago," he began, "the Persians brought a great army to fight against Greece, and they landed at Marathon——"

"Oh! I know all about Marathon and the great battle," broke in the little boy. "My great-grandfather fought there, and so did old Sciton, and they conquered the Persians, and I have Sciton's sword, and I mean to conquer the Persians myself when I am grown up."

"Be it so, young master," said the messenger. "Well, as soon as the magistrates at Athens knew that the Persians had landed, they thought where they could get help. And it seemed to them that the most likely place was here in Sparta. For the Spartans are not only the best soldiers in Greece, but they are always ready. So they wrote a letter and sent for my grandfather to carry it. The news about the Persians came to them just at midnight, and my grandfather was on his way two hours afterwards, and he got to Sparta just before midnight on the next day."

"How far is it?" asked Gorgo.

"One thousand and ninety-six stadia," answered Lagopus. (This is about one hundred and thirty-seven miles.)

"I do not remember hearing of any Spartans being at the battle," said Hipponax.

"No, young sir," replied the runner, "they were not in time. You see that when my grandfather reached Sparta it was the ninth day of the moon, and their custom is not to set out on expeditions except at the full moon. So they had to wait for five days. But they started as soon as ever they saw the full moon in the sky, and they got to Athens early in the afternoon of the third day."

"Was that very quick?" asked Hipponax.

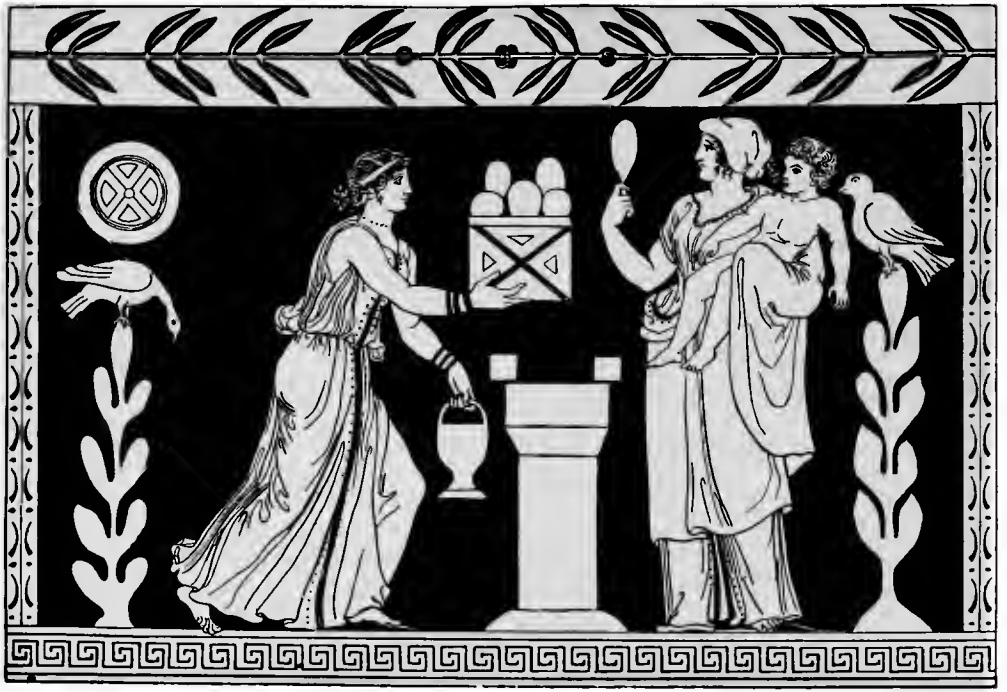
"Wonderful for men with heavy armor. Still they were too late, for the battle was over by the time they came. So all they could do was to go on to Marathon, and see the Persians that had been killed lying on the field—for they had not been buried yet,—and then march home again."

"I should like to be a great runner when I grow up," said Hipponax. Then he thought for a little time, and changed his mind. "No, I will be a soldier, and fight with Sciton's sword."

Elpinicé gave the messenger a gold-piece for his good news, and she wrote a letter which he was to carry back to her husband.

"*Elpinicé, to her most beloved and honored husband, Leon, son of Hipponax, greeting. The gods be thanked for your deliverance! Your letter has made me and the children more happy than can be set forth in words. We set out on the tenth day. Meanwhile let this parchment, which we have all kissed many times, carry our salutations. Farewell.*"

Elpinicé would have started sooner, but that she had made an engagement with a Spartan lady of her acquaintance to go with her to the temple of Artemis (or Diana, to use the name by which she is best known). This lady's child had been very ill, and Elpinicé and nurse had helped her with it very much. The Spartan mother did not know much about nursing, for when a child was weakly it was not allowed to live. This baby had been strong and healthy enough when it was born and for some months afterwards. Then it began to ail, and could



A CHILD PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE.

hardly have been saved but for the skill and patience with which Elpinicé nursed it. Now it was quite well, and, indeed, was a particularly fine and strong boy, whom the mother was very proud to present, after the Spartan fashion, in the temple of "Artemis the Child-Rearer."

This picture shows you the mother holding the boy in her arms. He is older than the children usually were when they were presented. This is because his illness had prevented his being brought before. The other lady is Elpinicé herself. In one hand she is holding a square basket of small loaves made of the very finest wheat-flour. (The bread that the Spartans used commonly to eat was made of barley or rye.) In the other hand she has a jar of wine. The loaves and the wine were always offered on these occasions: and there was also offered what you do not see in the picture, a sucking-pig. The very poorest Spartan mother was not content unless she could do this. First a portion of these things were burnt in the fire. This was the goddess' share, Manto thought.

The smoke went up into the air with the smell of what had been burnt, and the goddess was supposed to smell it, and be pleased with the worshippers who offered it. Then what was left was divided, put into baskets, and sent round to friends. Elpinicé's friend, who had the same name, by the way, as the Gorgo we know, was the wife of one of the Ephors, and was rich. She offered I do not know how many sucking-pigs, and loaves of wheaten bread, and jars of wine, so that she feasted half Sparta with them. This was how she tried to show her thankfulness for being able to bring her little son safe and sound to the temple; and though it was an ignorant way we may hope that it was not refused.

The next day Elpinicé and the children started for Tegea, which was a city, as you may see from a map, a little way inside the borders of Arcadia. Manto went with them. She was now the mother of a fine boy, and she had not been very strong since its birth. She was recommended to try the air of the Arcadian mountains for a change.

The journey did not occupy more than one day. The distance, indeed, was something less than thirty miles, and so the party were able to reach Pauson's house, which was a mile outside the town, a little before nightfall. Leon, who had been detained by business in Athens longer than he had expected, happened to arrive about noon the same day. How glad the family were to be together again after a separation of more than two years I cannot pretend to describe.

A very delightful time they all had with the kind old Arcadian host, the very same Pauson, you must know, who had given Leon his hunting spear. Hipponax saw with a little shudder the very skin of the bear which had almost killed his father twenty years before, and was very much pleased to find dogs that were great-nephews or, it may have been, great-great-nephews of their own Hylax. So like were they to the old dog that one would have thought he had come to life again. It was too early in the year for hunting; but then there was plenty of what was far better fun for the children,—

fishing. A stream ran through Pauson's garden; and there was a little waterfall with a pool below it in which the girls and Hipponax, with a slave lad to look after them, were never tired of fishing. Then one day the whole party, which had now been joined by Manto's husband, went on an expedition to a beautiful sheet of water that there was three or four miles from the town. It was a bright, calm day, too bright and calm for fishing, for you could see the fish far down in the clear water, and, of course, the fish could see you and your line, and all your little tricks for catching them. Hipponax was getting excited when he looked over the edge of the boat and saw the big fishes swim up to his bait and look just as if they were just going to take it. But when this had happened twenty or thirty times, and the fish always ended by sailing away again, he lost his patience, and began to grow quite angry. However, he caught two or three little ones, who were less cautious than their elders, and at last one of the elders themselves. The creature was smelling at

the bait for at least the tenth time when the fisherman said to Hipponax, "Now 's the time, sir," and at the same time laid hold of the little boy's hand and gave the line a sideways jerk. And there, sure enough, the fish was hooked. What pulling and struggling there was before he could be got into the boat! but at the last moment he seemed to be lost, for the hook came out of his mouth. But he was quite spent with struggling, and lay on his side without moving, so that the fisherman could slip a small net under him. Hipponax's delight at *his* fish was beyond all expression.

Towards noon, when the sun grew very hot, the party took shelter under a grove of trees that grew by the side of the lake. There they had their mid-day meal, and when this was over they were entertained by a playing and singing match between two shepherds. Pauson offered a kid and a skin of wine for a prize. First the two men played on their shepherd's pipes. These were something like what is now called a mouth organ, a number of pipes, of unequal size,

joined together, each with a stop on which the player could put his finger. Then they sang each a verse of a song. These were sometimes funny, sometimes serious; but as they were in a very rude country dialect no one but Pauson, who was an Arcadian born, understood much about them. After all, the contest was never decided. Pauson, who was judge, said that they were both so good that he did not know which was the better. So he ended by giving a kid and a skin of wine to both.

Altogether the day at the lake was a very pleasant one.

CHAPTER XVI.

AT CORINTH.

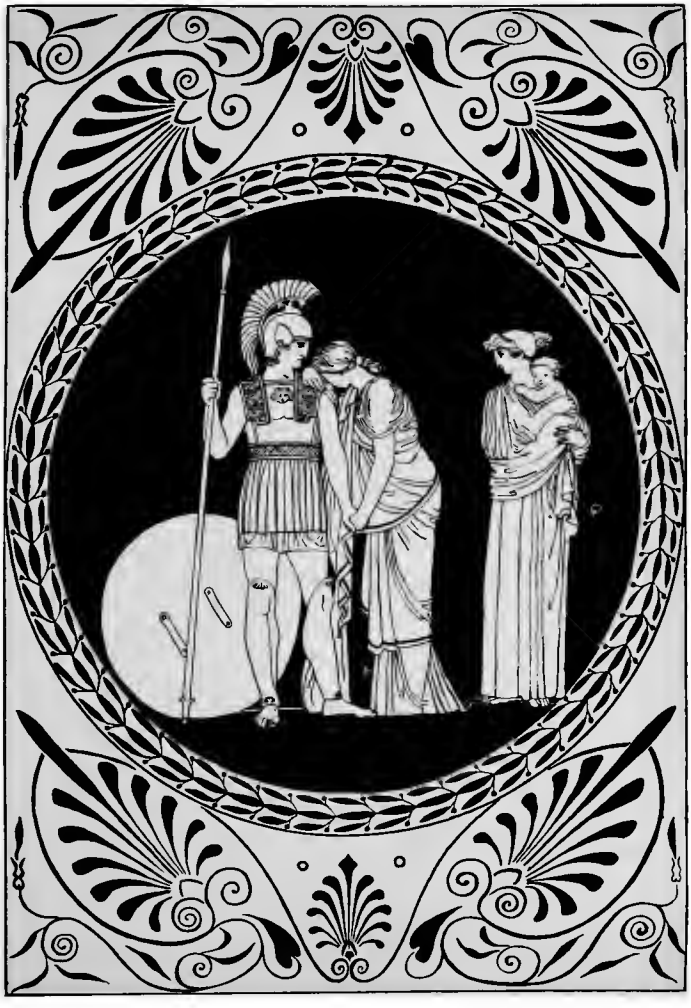
After a most delightful visit of six weeks the party at Pauson's house broke up. Manto's husband was the first to go. Orders came to him from home that he was to take command of some soldiers that were to march to the border of the country of the Argives. The Argives were always on bad terms with the Spartans, and they were now collecting an army which might do some mischief. So Agis had to take leave of his wife and baby, and was quite surprised to find, for the first time in his life, that it was not always a delightful thing to be a soldier. As for Manto, she quite broke down when the time for parting came. No one would have known her for the same young woman who, a year or so before, could have boasted that she had never cried since she was a baby. She was

a little ashamed of herself now, but her friends thought her improved for not being quite so hard. She had grown to love the three Athenian children; so it was settled that she should remain with the party for the present and perhaps pay a visit to them at their Marathon home.

The day after Agis had left they all started for Corinth, where they meant to stop for a short time on their way home. Certain games, called the "Isthmian" games, because they were held on the isthmus that joins the Peloponnesus to the mainland of Greece, were about to take place, and a young Athenian, Hippocles by name, who was cousin to Leon, was going to try for the prize in one of them. Leon himself had won a prize when he was a young man, and he wished to see how his cousin might fare.

It would tire you out were I to tell you of all the wonderful and beautiful things that our party saw in Corinth. I shall speak of two only.

First there was a very fine statue in front of one of the temples, about which their guide



GOING TO THE WARS.

told them a curious story. The statue was of a woman, young and very beautiful. At her feet there lay several rolls of parchment, all, of course, worked in marble, and she was looking at a helmet which she held in her right hand, and which she seemed to be just going to put on. "That lady's name," said their guide to them, "was Telesilla, and she lived not quite a hundred years ago. Those rolls of parchment that you see at her feet are the poems which she wrote. The girls sing some of them still at our festivals. But it is for her courage that we chiefly honor her, and that is shown by the helmet which she holds in her hand. The Spartans, you must know, defeated our people in a great battle, and killed a great many of them, and most of them that escaped from the battle were burnt to death in a sacred enclosure in which they had taken refuge. There were hardly any men left in Argos, and so, when the Spartans went on to attack the city, there seemed no help for it but that they would take it. Then Telesilla gathered all the slaves that

could fight, and the old men and boys, and all the women that were young and strong, and armed them with all the arms that had been left in the houses and temples, and drew them up in array at the place which she knew the enemy would attack. The Spartans came up, and raised their war-cry, thinking that the women would be frightened at the sound. But when they saw that they stood quite firm they thought to themselves: 'It would be no credit to us if we were to conquer these women and kill them; and if, by any chance, they should conquer us, it would be a very great disgrace.' And the end of it was that they went away without attacking the city. This Telesilla was a woman of Corinth, and the people of Argos set up this statue of her in her own city."

The second thing that they saw was a copy of the famous chest of Cypselus, who had been a king of Corinth about a hundred and fifty years ago. (The real chest was kept elsewhere in a temple in which it had been offered.)

It had some writing on it, in which the words were put in a curious order like this:

HERE ROUND FAIR LETO'S SON THE ARCHER KING
A GRACEFUL BAND THE MUSES STAND AND SING

This was the old-fashioned way, and was called the ox-turning fashion. When a man ploughs a field he begins at the top and makes his first furrow down to the bottom, and then he turns his oxen (if he is ploughing with oxen, as they always used to do in those days), and makes his second furrow from the bottom to the top.

On the sides and on the top of this chest there were hundreds of figures beautifully carved. I can describe only a very few of them: Hercules, the strong man, was bending his bow to shoot the great water-snake, and Atlas, the giant, was standing up with the heavens resting on his shoulders. In another place there were two warriors fighting, and two women looking on. One of these warriors had golden armor, but his face was quite black. The guide said: "That is Memnon the African, and the woman who is standing near him is his mother, the

Goddess of the Morning. You see how she shines all over, and there seem to be rays of light coming out of her head. The other warrior is the great Achilles. His mother stands by him. She was a sea goddess, as you may see by her robe being all blue." Then again, there were some girls riding in a carriage drawn by mules, with what looked like a basket full of linen between them. The children thought it quite strange that this very simple thing, which they might see any day, should have a place among all these wonderful figures of gods and heroes and warriors, and were very curious to know what it meant. Their father smiled, and said: "I am not quite sure, but I do believe that it has something to do with your old friend Ulysses. Do you remember where we left him?"

"Oh, yes," said Hipponax, "he had been shipwrecked and had just got to land, and had thrown the veil into the sea without looking behind him."

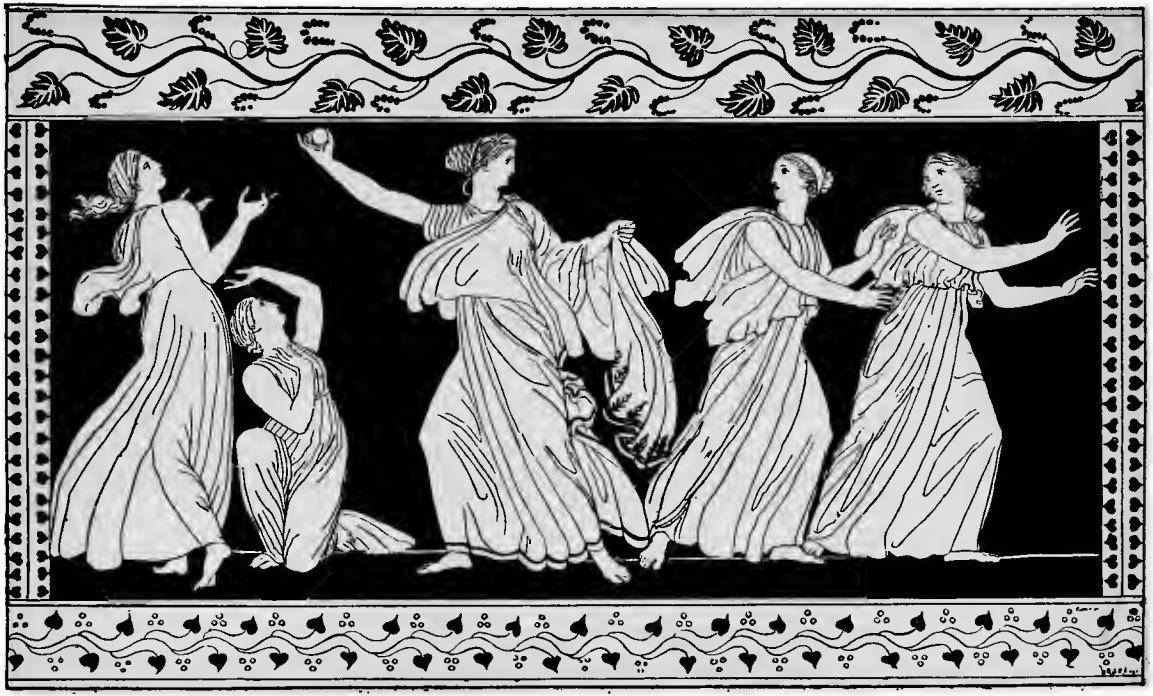
The girls had never heard this part of the

story, so Leon had to tell it again for their benefit. When it was finished he went on.

"As you may suppose, Ulysses was quite tired out when he got at last to the land. He had been two days and nights floating about in the sea, and, for seventeen days before, while he was on the raft, he had never slept. So he now crept into a hollow place under an old olive tree, and covered himself up warm with dead leaves, and fell fast asleep. Meanwhile, the goddess Athené was contriving a way of helping him. That very morning—for it was very early in the morning when Ulysses got to the land—she appeared in a dream to the daughter of the king of the country, and said to her: 'What a pity it is that such a good mother should have such an idle daughter! Here are all the clothes want washing. Yet you know that you are going soon to be married. Wake up, and ask your father to let you have the carriage with the mules to take you to the river to wash the clothes.'

"So Nausicaa, for that was the name of the

king's daughter, got up, and went to her father, and asked for the mule carriage. She was too shy to say any thing about being married, but she said: 'Father dear, the clothes want washing. You ought always to have a clean white robe when you go to the Council, and my five brothers like to be well dressed when they dance.' Her father said: 'Very good, my child. The men shall harness the wagon for you.' So the men harnessed the wagon, and put the clothes into it, with plenty for the girls to eat and drink, and oil to rub themselves with when they had bathed. So they went to the river, and washed the clothes, and spread them out on the rocks to dry. And, when their work was done, they bathed, and after their bath they had their meal, and when their meal was finished, they had a game at ball. It was this game at ball that led to their helping Ulysses. For the princess, throwing the ball to one of the other girls, threw it so wide that it fell into the river. Thereupon they all cried out so loud that Ulysses woke up, for he might have slept



PLAYING AT BALL.

for hours longer, so tired was he. Then he covered himself as best he could, for he had no clothes, with a leafy branch, and came out of his hiding-place. All the girls were terribly frightened—and, indeed, he had a very wild, strange look; but Nausicaa stood firm, for a king's daughter should be brave. Then he told her how he had come there, and she gave him food and wine, and some of her brothers' clothes to put on. And when he was refreshed, she took him to the city. She told the king, her father, all his story; and the king put him on board one of his ships, and sent him back to his native country. And so Ulysses got back to his home, through the girls playing at ball."

When they had looked at all the figures, the guide told them the story of the chest itself.

"About a hundred and fifty years ago this city of Corinth was ruled by a few families who were all related to each other. Now in one of these families there was a daughter who was so plain that not one of the young men, her cousins, wished to marry her. So she was

given to another citizen, who was glad to marry her, not only because she was rich and had powerful relations, but also because she was a very lovable woman. After she had been married some time she had a little son, and a prophet said to her kinsfolk: 'Take care of Labda's son'—the woman's name was Labda,—'or he will do you a great mischief.' So they determined to kill the poor little baby. They chose ten out of their number, and sent them on this errand to Labda's house. When they came to the house, they asked for the child, and Labda, who had no notion of what they were thinking about, took it out of its cradle, and put it into the arms of one of the ten. Now they had settled among themselves, as they were coming, that the one to whom the mother might happen to give the child, for they felt sure that this was what she would do, should dash it down upon the ground, and so kill it. But by a wonderful chance the baby smiled in the man's face, and when he saw it smile he felt as if he could not kill it, and so handed it to another; and the man to whom he handed it felt just the

same. So it was handed in turn to all the ten, and not one of them had the heart to hurt it. Then they all went out of the house. But as soon as they were outside the door they fell to quarrelling with each other, and they were particularly angry with the man to whom the baby was first handed, calling him a soft-hearted fool, and other names of the kind. Then they agreed to go back and do the wicked deed. But Labda had heard all they had been saying to each other. She guessed that they might come back; so she hid the child in the most unlikely place that she could think of, and that was a corn-bin. So the ten men looked all over the house, but never thought of opening the corn-bin. And as they could not find the child, they thought it best to go back to those who sent them, and tell them a false story of how they had killed the baby. Sure enough, when he grew up to be a man this same child destroyed all these families, root and branch. And he made a model of the corn-bin, and had all these curious things carved upon it."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GAMES.

It need hardly be said that the children, and I may say their father and mother too, were very much interested in the games. Leon went to see them himself, and he might have taken his little boy with him as some fathers did, but he thought it would not be quite good for the little fellow, and accordingly left him at home, very much to his disappointment. Elpinicé and the girls, of course, had to be content with hearing what had happened, for women were not allowed to be present on these occasions.

On the great day of the games, when the "Contest of the Five Exercises" was to take place, the children were immensely excited. It was in this that young Hippocles, their cousin, was going to contend. (I should tell you that the five exercises were leaping, quoit-throwing,

running, wrestling, and javelin-throwing.) All the afternoon Hipponax went on running to the door to see whether he could see or hear something. And at last he did see something. A little procession was coming up the street, with some flute-players playing very lively music in front. In the middle some one was being carried on a sort of little platform. "It is he! It is he!" Hipponax screamed out, and ran to tell his mother and sisters. And sure enough it was Hippocles, who was being carried home by his young companions. Very nearly all the Athenians in Corinth were with him, for every one was proud to see a countryman of his own win a prize at the games, especially so difficult and honorable a prize as this. When I say a "prize," I must tell you that it was only a garland of pine leaves. Men and boys were content in those days to do their best for the honor of winning, without thinking of what they would get for it.

Of course, as soon as the young man got into the house he had to tell the whole story to the children.

"How many were there against you?" asked Gorgo.

"There were nine. Two were Spartans; two were from Tegea, one of them the very tallest man that I ever saw,—he was four cubits, a palm, and two fingers high" (this would be about 6 ft. 7 in.); "and three came from other places in the Island.[1] From other parts there came only one besides myself. He was a certain Theron, from Taras[2] in Italy, who looked more like a woman than a man, but who was very hard to beat."

"Why should not a woman be hard to beat," said Gorgo, who was always ready to stand up for women. "You should have seen Manto, the Spartan. There was hardly a man that had a chance with her."

"I can quite believe," said Hippocles, "that the women would beat us, if they were allowed to enter. Well, we had the first contest at sunrise. It was of leaping over the bar. Now

[1] By the "Island" Hippocles meant the Island of Pelops or Peloponnesus.

[2] Taras is Tarentum, now Tarento.

they have a way, as you may have heard, of having a flute-player to play a tune while the competitors leap. A very good custom it is, if only the man knows how to play. This fellow did not, and as I have a fine ear he baulked me very much. For every time that I was taking off for my jump he sounded a false note. I am sure he made me miss a couple of fingers" (an inch and a half). "However, I do not think that I could have won in any case, for the giant from Arcadia scrambled with his long legs over such a height as I have never been able to achieve. A more ugly jumper I never saw, but as he managed to get his legs over the bar somehow, that did not matter."

"Oh! but that was a bad beginning," said Rhodium; "did n't you feel very much disappointed?"

"No, little one; I never expected to win in the jumping match, for I knew exactly how much I could do, and it would not have been enough, except the other had been very bad. The next thing was the foot-race. And here the gods

favored me, for when we drew lots for places I got the next place to the best,[1] the best falling to the tall Arcadian, who was the slowest runner of all. I knew that if I could get to the turning point before him I could take his course. And this is exactly what I did. He was off with a wonderful leap, but I soon passed him, and was first at the turning point. If it had not been for this I could scarcely have won. As it was, the Tarentine was said by the judges to be equal to me.

"After the foot-race came the quoit-throwing.[2] There was never any doubt how this would end. The tall Arcadian's great height gave him an advantage with which none of us could cope. Indeed, he threw the iron farther than it has ever been thrown before in the memory of man. His throw was seven fathoms (42

[1] The course was of the shape of a horse-shoe, and the inside place was the best.

[2] The quoit was a great lump of iron, with a hole in the middle, through which was put a handle of wood or leather, by help of which it was thrown. It was not aimed at a mark. The object, as now in the game called "putting the stone," was to throw it as far as possible.

feet), a wonderful thing seeing that the quoit weighed twelve minas (about 10 lbs.). I myself only made a throw for form's sake, for I did not wish to weary myself to no purpose. Next came throwing javelins at a mark. There were now left only three of the nine, not one of the other six having won a single victory. The three were the tall Arcadian, who had won twice, the man from Taras and myself, who had each won once. If the Arcadian should win again he would have taken the prize, but of this in the javelin-throwing we had no fear, for it could easily be seen that the man had more strength than skill. Indeed, one could not but laugh to see how wide was his aim. It would have been safe to stand at the mark, but there was danger everywhere else, so much at random did the man throw. One of those that were looking on had, indeed, as narrow an escape of his life as ever I saw. With the Tarentine and myself there happened as strange a thing as ever was seen at the games. First we aimed at the large mark, which was

the figure of a man, standing five fathoms off. This we each hit three times, twice on the head and once between the shoulders. Then we threw at the smaller mark. He aimed first and hit it, and I, aiming next, cleft his javelin with mine. And on a second trial the same thing happened again, only that this time it was I who first struck the mark, and he who cleft my javelin. Thereupon the judges said that we should both contend in the last trial, which was that of the wrestling.

"As there were three competitors it was necessary that two should contend and the third sit by. So there were put into a silver urn three lots marked with the letters A, B, and C, and the herald shouted: 'He that by favor of the gods shall draw the lot marked C shall be the sitter-by.' We each in turn put our hands into the urn, and when we opened the lots, which were pieces of parchment written on, the C was mine. Then the chief judge said to me: 'Young man, without doubt the gods favor you. Twice you have narrowly escaped

defeat, and now they give you this advantage. Be worthy of their goodness. Meanwhile come and sit by me.' So, wrapping myself in a cloak which your kind father lent me, I sat on the judges' bench.

"Then the tall Arcadian wrestled with the man from Taras. Their struggle was fierce but short, for the latter could not stand up against the giant. In the first bout the big man lifted the other clean from the ground, and threw him at full length. In the second they fell both together, the Tarentine very cleverly striking the giant's ankle with his foot. The third time was as the first, only that the fall was more violent, for the Tarentine lay upon the ground like one dead."

"Was he hurt?" cried the pitiful little Rhodium.

"Nothing to speak of, only one rib broken. Well, I must confess that I did not quite like the prospect of wrestling with this big fellow. However, it turned out well. The judges, seeing that the Arcadian was wearied, commanded

that there should be a pause of an hour. If it had not been for this I could scarce have won.

"But how was that?" said Elpinicé. "Surely the man was the stronger for his rest."

"He should have been," answered Hippocles, "but he was not. For, being very hot and thirsty, the giant comforted himself with a large draught of wine and water. You see he had had one of those trainers who keep their pupils like so many slaves, and whom, of course, their pupils are always trying to deceive. But I have been trained as a free man should be, and knew that all the rules were made for my good, and that to break them would be to harm myself. Well, the end of it was that the man was so puffed and so out of breath that I felt he was not much to be feared. At the first, indeed, he almost carried me off my feet, but I held on to the ground with all my might, and he soon relaxed something of his strength. In the first bout we both fell, and the judges gave the victory to neither. After this, the man's strength failed, and as he had but little skill, I conquered

him easily. Twice I tripped him up with a blow of my foot."

"Twice!" said Leon, "was he not better on his guard than to allow that?"

"He had little wit, as sometimes happens with giants; I did but change the foot with which I struck, and that at which I aimed."

"Well, it was well done, my dear cousin," said Elpinicé.

"But I must tell you what the first judge said to me, when he gave me the crown. It seemed to me to be very wise and true: 'Take this crown, which you have well deserved. It is not worth the less because the gods manifestly favor you. Health and strength pass away, but piety you can always cherish, and having piety, you have also the love of the gods.'"

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT HOME AGAIN.

Leon and his family stopped at Corinth for some time after the games were finished. The fact was that, though there was still peace, between Athens and Sparta a good deal of angry feeling had sprung up, and it seemed doubtful whether it would be well for Manto to go with her Athenian friends, as had been once arranged. So they waited week after week to see how things would turn out; and as there was plenty to see in Corinth and the places round about, they did not find it at all dull. At last Agis, who had got away from his soldier's duty, made up his mind to take his wife back to Sparta. Manto was very sorry to say good-bye to them, and the girls were almost broken-hearted at the thought of losing the dear little baby. After this there was nothing to keep

AT THE VINTAGE.

them at Corinth. Within a day or two it happened by good luck that their old friend, the *Xantho*, came into harbor. The former mate was now captain, and Leon was very glad to accept his offer of a passage to Athens, which his master had told him to make.

The voyage to Athens was made in safety. They sailed inside Salamis by Megara. This was not the shortest way, as you will see by the map, but it was the most sheltered, and so the smoothest. And they had the pleasure of seeing old Ladon. He was fishing, as usual, for anchovies.

At Athens they stopped longer than they had expected, and far longer than the children wished. First, Leon had a good deal of business to do; and then, when he was ready to start, there was a fire at the Marathon home, and much had to be done before it was ready for the family. As it was, they came just in time for the rejoicings at the end of the vintage.

The children had never been in the country before at this time, and they were very much

amused at what they saw. There were dances of the women, and dances of the men, and singing, and the music of flutes and cymbals and drums. But the most curious thing was the way in which some of the men dressed themselves up. They had goat-skins and deer-skins round their waists; these reached down to a little above their knees. All the rest of their bodies was bare, and so were their arms. These parts were curiously painted with many colors, black and red and yellow and blue. They had garlands, too, of various kinds of leaves, and they wore masks, which were like the heads of animals, bears and lions and tigers. Last of all there was a play. This was chosen by Leon, who had seen it acted a few years before in Athens, and thought it very beautiful. I should tell you that plays were always acted at the feasts of the wine god, and that at this feast, at the end of the vintage, old plays used to be brought out again. And now I will tell you something of what they saw.

First of all they saw Apollo with his bow

and arrows walking up and down in front of the house of King Admetus. He tells the people that the king had been about to die, but had been told that he might live if he could get some one to die in his stead, and that his wife, Alcestis, had offered to do this, and now the day was come when Death was to fetch her. Then Death came upon the stage, dressed in black, with a black mask upon his face. He and Apollo have a long dispute, for Apollo wants Death to take some old person instead of the young Alcestis; but Death declares that he will not be robbed of his prey, and that he wants the young as well as the old. So he carries her off. Very soon after he has gone comes in Hercules with his lion's skin and his bow and quiver on his shoulders, and his great club in his hand. He is on one of his journeys, to get the horses of Diomed, King of Thrace, terrible creatures, that their master used to feed on the flesh of men. Admetus is an old friend, and he wishes to stop for the night in his house. The king is too hospitable to send him away.

He does not deny that there has been a death in the house, but he says it was the death of some one not related to him, which was true in a way, for Alcestis, though she was his wife, was not related to him. Hercules, when he hears this, consents to stay.

The next scene showed Hercules eating and drinking and singing merry songs. He cannot understand why all the people about him look so sad, and thinks that they are not treating him as a guest very well. At last he makes himself so disagreeable that the steward tells him the truth, that the dead woman was his host's wife. Hercules is very much ashamed of himself and his behavior, and determines to do what he can to make amends.

In the last scene he comes in leading by the hand a woman whose face is covered by a veil. He tells the king that he has won her as a prize in some games, and he wants him to take care of her in his house. Admetus does not like to undertake the charge, and the two have a long argument about it. At last he consents, and

tells his servants to lead her to the palace. "You should not hand the lady over to servants," says Hercules. "Then lead her in yourself," answered the king. "Not I; you must take her, and only you." "She may go into the house, but I will not take her." "But it is to no one but you that I would trust her." "You constrain me against my will. But if I must, I must." "Reach out your hand, then." "I would as soon touch a Fury's head." "Have you hold of her?" "I have." "Then keep her, and see to whom she is like."

So as Admetus lifted off the veil all the children cried out together: "Oh, she is his wife come home again!"

"And we have come home again," said Gorgo, when the people had finished clapping their hands, "and it is very nice, though we have not been dead."

THE END.

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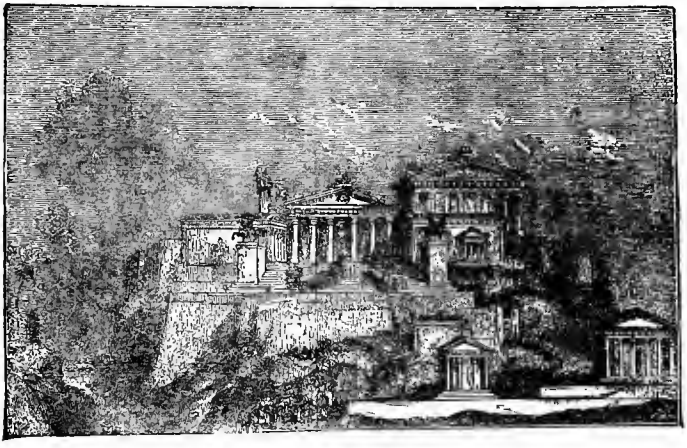

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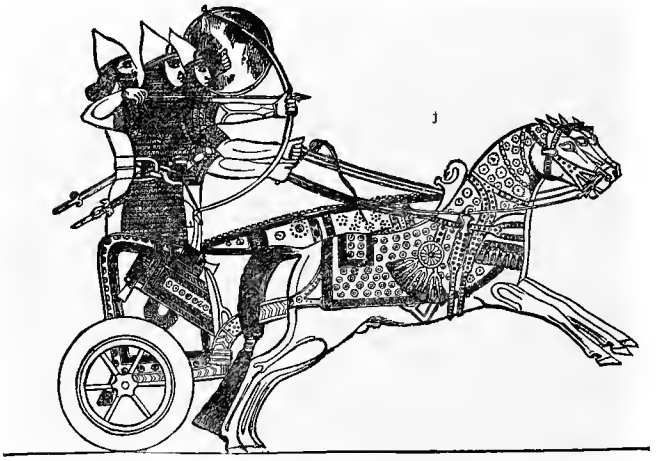

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